universität wien

DIPLOMARBEIT

„Film – der Retter des Theaters?“

Pulitzer-Preis prämiertes Theater adaptiert für den Film

Katharina Sporrer

Magister der Philosophie (Mag.phil.)

Wien, im April 2011

Studienkennzahl lt. Studienblatt:	A 317
Studienrichtung lt. Studienblatt:	Theater-, Film- und Medienwissenschaft
Betreuerin ODER Betreuer:	Univ.-Prof. Dr. Michael Gissenwehrer

Übersetzungen sind wie Frauen –
wenn sie schön sind, sind sie nicht treu;
wenn sie treu sind, sind sie nicht schön.

Les belles infidèles, Frankreich 17Jhdt.

Ehrenwörtliche Erklärung

Ich versichere, dass

− ich die Diplomarbeit selbständig verfasst habe, keine anderen als die angegeben Quellen und Hilfsmittel benutzt und mich auch sonst keiner unerlaubten Hilfe bedient habe.

− ich dieses Diplomarbeitsthema bisher weder im In- noch im Ausland in irgendeiner Form (einem/einer Beurteiler/in zu Begutachtung) als Prüfungsarbeit vorgelegt habe.

− diese Arbeit mit der vom Begutachter beurteilten Arbeit übereinstimmt.

Wien, April 2011

Katharina Sporrer

Inhaltsverzeichnis

Ehrenwörtliche Erklärung

Danksagung

Einleitung 1

I. Der Pulitzer-Preis 4

I.1. Preise für Kunst und Kultur 4

I.2. Joseph Pulitzer 6

I.3. Columbia School of Journalism 8

I.4. Die „Academy Awards“ 9

I.5. Das *Advisory Board* 10

I.6. Der Pulitzer-Preis für Drama 13

I.7. Die Jury 15

I.8. Das Auswahlverfahren 17

I.9. Das Pulitzer-Preis Stück 20

I.10. Nationaler/Internationaler Stellenwert 21

II. Film – der nächste Schritt der Evolution? 25

II.1. Der Pulitzer-Preis für Drama – ein Filmpreis 25

II.2. Die Wurzel der Adaption 26

II.3. Adaption – wieso? 28

II.4. Film und Fernsehen – die Retter des Theaters 31

II.5. Theater und Film – eine unendliche Beziehung 34

II.6. Theaterstück = Kunstwerk, Drehbuch = Anleitung 38

II.7. Entstehungsprozess 41

II.8. Rezeption 43

II.9. Der Film – das Endprodukt? 45

II.10. Problematiken von Adaptionen 46

III. *Proof* von David Auburn 48

III.1. David Auburn 48

III.2. Stil 50
III.3. *Proof* 53
III.3.1. Form 53
III.3.2. Analyse 53
III.3.2.1. Plot 54
III.3.2.2. Figuren 57
III.3.2.3. Thematik 63
III.3.2.4. Genre 64
III.3.2.5. Stil 64
III.4. Der Weg von *Proof* zum Pulitzer Preis 66
III.5. *Proof* – die filmische Adaption 69
III.5.1. Adaptionsentscheidungen 71
III.5.2. Anfangssequenz 71
III.5.3. *Proof* – die Ausnahme? 73

Schlussbemerkung 78
Bibliographie 79
Anhang 84
Interview David Auburn 84
Interview Chris Boneau 109
Interview Terence Lamude 144
Interview Linda Winer 169
Abstract
Lebenslauf

Danksagung

Die Abfassung dieser Diplomarbeit war ein langer, von zahlreichen Unterbrechungen und Neuanfängen gezeichneter Prozess, der mir jedoch beinahe so viel gelehrt hat wie das Studium selbst.

Ich möchte meinem Betreuer Univ.-Prof. Dr. Michael Gissenwehrer für die Motivation im Endstadium und für das schnelle Lesen meiner Arbeit danken.

In New York waren mir meine Tante Katja und mein Onkel Fritz, während vieler Gespräche und warmer Abendessen eine große Stütze. Tante Katja kennt nun auch alle Werke von David Auburn.

Meine Cousine Nadja Kaspar war meine moralische Unterstützung und hat mich in Arbeitspausen motiviert. Iris Persterer, Alex Farr, Martin Gebauer, Bika Rebek und Markus Kuperfblum standen mir immer zur Seite, egal welche Krisen das Schreiben gerade verlangsamten. Katharina Beyrich hat in einem Moment der Verzweiflung, meine noch sehr ungeordnete Arbeit gelesen und mir Mut gemacht.

Meine Mutter Nedka Seystock und mein Stiefvater Helmuth Seystock haben mich mein gesamtes Studium lang emotional und finanziell unterstützt. Sie haben mir geholfen zahlreiche Reisen zu unternehmen, wie auch die Forschungsreise im Rahmen dieser Arbeit und dafür gebührt ihnen mein großer Dank.

Für das genaue und schnelle Korrekturlesen aller meiner Seiten möchte ich meiner Stiefmutter Maria Rupp-Sporrer danken, ich weiß nicht was ich ohne sie getan hätte.

Schließlich möchte ich diese Arbeit meinem Vater Rudolf Sporrer widmen. Es war immer sein Traum bei meiner Sponsion dabei zu sein und zu mir „Frau Magister“ sagen zu dürfen. Leider ist er noch vor Beendigung meines Studiums überraschend verstorben. Er fehlt mir jeden Tag.

Einleitung

Meine vorliegende Diplomarbeit beschäftigt sich mit der Bedeutung der filmischen Adaption von Pulitzer-Preis prämierten Theaterstücken. Ich möchte in meiner Arbeit diskutieren, ob der nächste natürliche Schritt in der „Evolution“ eines Theaterstücks die Verfilmung ist und was dies für das Drama als eigenständige Kunstform bedeutet, sowie welche Rolle der Pulitzer-Preis in diesem Prozess spielt.

Die Arbeit ist in drei Hauptteile gegliedert. Der erste Teil beschäftigt sich mit dem Pulitzer-Preis. Es wird seine Geschichte erzählt, spezifisch die der Kategorie Drama, und welche Bedeutung der Preis gesellschaftlich und künstlerisch hat, sowie eine Darstellung des Auswahlprozesses.

Der zweite Teil betrifft die Schnittstelle zwischen Film und Theater. Welche Zusammenhänge und Einflüsse gibt es zwischen diesen verwandten Medien. Wieso kommt es so oft zu Adaptionen von Bühnenwerken? Welche Problematiken bringt dies mit sich? Was sind die Auswirkungen auf beide Kunstgattungen? Ich beschränke mich ausschließlich auf den amerikanischen Markt, hauptsächlich auf New York City, da jegliche Vergleiche mit dem subventionierten Theaterbetrieb in Österreich zu weitläufig wären.

Der abschließende dritte Teil berichtet exemplarisch von dem Pulitzer-Preis-Sieger *Proof*. Sowohl der Autor mit seinem Werk, als auch Theaterstück und Adaption werden hier diskutiert. Die Fäden laufen hier zusammen und der Kreis zwischen Theaterstück, Preis und Verfilmung schließt sich.

Im Rahmen meiner Recherche entschied ich mich Ende 2009 selbst nach New York zu fahren und selbstfinanziert an der Columbia University zu recherchieren. Dies gab mir die Möglichkeit, besonders viel Literatur mein Thema betreffend, zu finden, da der Preis von der Columbia University verliehen wird. Weiteres gelang es mir, vier Experteninterviews zu führen,

welche mir wertvolles Material geliefert haben und sich in Zitaten in meiner Arbeiten wieder finden.

Ich habe die Interviews qualitativ geführt und habe offene Fragen gestellt, was dazu geführt hat, dass ich sehr viele Informationen und Detailwissen erfahren durfte. Es handelt sich um Intensivinterviews, die jeweils mindestens zwei Stunden dauerten und, bis auf eines, in Restaurants stattgefunden haben. Ich habe sie alle mit meinem Diktiergerät bzw. meinem Mobiltelefon aufgenommen und schließlich transkribiert. Die seitenlangen Transkriptionen lassen sich im Anhang finden. Die Zitate in dieser Diplomarbeit beziehen sich auf die Transkriptionen.

Mein erster Interviewpartner war David Auburn, Autor des Pulitzer-Preis gewinnenden Stücks *Proof*, mit welchem sich die vorliegende Arbeit exemplarisch beschäftigt. Durch etwas Recherche gelang es mir seinen Agenten zu kontaktieren, welcher innerhalb von 24 Stunden den persönlichen Kontakt herstellte. Es war eine große Ehre, den Autor persönlich zu treffen und ihm eine große Bandbreite an Fragen zu seinem Werk stellen zu dürfen.

Als nächstes traf ich Chris Boneau, den Gründer der größten Pressefirma des Broadways, *Boneau/Bryan-Brown*, der sich auch um die PR von *Proof* kümmerte. Chris Boneau kontaktierte ich über die Internetplattform *Facebook*. Vorteil war, dass dies gleich einen persönlichen Kontakt herstellte, da er neben einem kurzen Schreiben auch ein Foto von mir sah und ich ihn somit direkt erreichte. Er schrieb prompt sehr freundlich zurück und lud mich in sein Büro mit Blick auf den Broadway ein. Er sprach mit mir stundenlang über seine Arbeit, den Pulitzer-Preis und das amerikanische Theater.

Dann befragte ich den New York Theaterregisseur Terence Lamude, der einen Gastvertrag am *Vienna's English Theater* im Jahr 2002 hielt und dort bei der Europapremiere von *Proof* Regie führte. Durch familiäre Kontakte kannte ich Terence schon vor meiner Recherche persönlich und

deshalb war es ein leichtes, ihn für ein Interview gewinnen zu können. Nicht nur hat er bei *Proof* Regie geführt, sondern ist auch als Theatermacher in New York aufgewachsen und konnte mir so viel interessantes Wissen und aufschlussreiche Beobachtungen vermitteln. Wir trafen uns in einem Diner zum Frühstück. Da dieses Interview leider im lautesten Umfeld stattgefunden hat, sind manche Gesprächsteile bei der späteren Transkription als unverständlich (//) gekennzeichnet.

Newsday Journalistin Linda Winer war besonders wichtig für meine Arbeit. Nicht nur zählt sie zu den führenden Theaterkritikerinnen des Landes, sondern sie war auch acht Mal Jury Mitglied des Pulitzerpreises und in dem Jahr in dem *Proof* gewonnen hat, führte sie sogar den Vorsitz. Durch ihre Lehrtätigkeit an der Columbia University kam ich schon nach ein paar Minuten Internetrecherche an eine E-Mail-Adresse und sie schrieb nach einigen Tagen sehr freundlich zurück. Kurz danach durfte ich sie nach einer Ihrer Unterrichtseinheiten abholen und ging mit ihr Abendessen, wobei sie mir viele Fragen sehr interessant beantwortete. Einige Tage später schickte sie mir auch ihre veröffentlichen Kritiken zu *Proof*, welche trotz ihres Jury-Vorsitzes in dem Siegesjahr, nicht positiv ausfielen. Während des Interviews wollte sie sich nicht „on-tape“ negativ äußern.

Ich möchte mit meiner Arbeit einen kleinen Blick in die gegenwärtige US-amerikanische Theaterszene gewähren und sowohl den Mythos des Pulitzer-Preises, als auch den der Theaterwelt erkunden.

I. Der Pulitzer-Preis

I.1. Preise für Kunst und Kultur

<<The whole system of prize-giving....belongs to an uncritical epoch; it is the act of people who, having learned the alphabet, refuse to learn how to spell. – Ezra Pound, quoted in Literary Digest, January 14, 1928>>[1]

Als „Geschenk an die Menschheit", beschrieb Alfred Nobel in seinem Testament 1885 eine Preisstiftung, welche als Vorbild des zeitgenössischen Preises für kulturelle und künstlerische Errungenschaften in zahlreichen Kategorien dient.

Das nahe Ableben von Nobel zur Zeit der Kreation des berühmten Nobelpreises ist mit der Natur von Preisen an sich eng verbunden. Unsterblichkeit und ein positiver Platz in der Geschichte, sind alte Motive für gute Taten mächtiger Menschen in Hinblick ihr nahendes Ende. Es scheint eine ideologische Verbindung zwischen Tod und Preisen zu geben. Die jährliche Verleihung führt zu dem ewigen Erinnern durch den ständigen Diskurs über den Preisstifter.[2]

Idealistisch betrachtet, sollte der Nobelpreis, wie seine erfolgreichen Nachahmer, schlicht die besten Handlungsführenden in den jeweiligen Kategorien ehren. Doch der Anspruch, die „besten" zu erkennen, bringt Fragen auf in Bezug auf die Legitimierung einer solchen Differenzierung.

Ein objektives Vergleichen ist bei Kunst und Literatur kaum möglich, zu sehr sind persönlicher Geschmack, Bildungshintergrund, persönliche Interessen und anderes subjektives Empfinden in den Bewertungsprozess involviert. Trotzdem versuchen Preisstiftungen immer den Schein der Objektivität zu wahren.

Preise für Literatur suggerieren, dass kreatives Schaffen ähnlich wie körperliche Stärke messbar ist und beinahe einem sportlichen Wettkampf gleicht. James F. English schreibt *The Economy of Prestige*, dass Preise zu einer Gleichsetzung von Künstlern und Boxern führen, in dem man Kunst wie einen Kampf ansieht aus dem ein klarer Gewinner hervorgeht.[3]

---

[1] English, James F.: 2005, p.28
[2] Vgl. English, James F.: 2005, p.49.
[3] vgl. English, James F.: 2005, p.2.

In der schier unüberblickbaren Masse des künstlerischen Schaffens haben sich Preise als Werkzeuge herauskristallisiert, um subjektives Empfinden scheinbar objektiv oder zu mindestens „professionell“ zu beurteilen und somit gewissen Werken eine besondere Wichtigkeit zuteil kommen zu lassen. Dies reflektiert auch eine Gesellschaft, die künstlerische Tätigkeiten nur durch Erfolg und Berühmtheit wahrzunehmen scheint. Der Wert eines Gemäldes hängt beinahe kaum davon ab, welche künstlerische Qualität es hat oder welche Gefühle in dem Betrachter ausgelöst werden, sondern welche messbaren Erfolge der Künstler schon errungen hat. Diese Macht, Meinungen, Gefühle und finanziellen Erfolg zu manipulieren und regulieren, führt dazu, die Motivation solcher Preisstiftungen zu hinterfragen. James F. English beginnt diesen Prozess mit folgenden Fragen:

<<questions about the various interests at stake for the institutional and individual agents of culture, the games and mechanisms and stratagems by means of which these interests assert themselves, and the ultimate role such cultural assertions of interest play in maintaining or altering the social distribution of power, which is to say the relative positions of different social groups and classes.>>[4]

Meist sind Preise mit akademischen Institutionen für Kunst und Kultur eng verbunden, so entsteht ein inzestuöses System, in welchem sowohl die Produktion, als auch ihre Bewertung unter einem Dach stattfindet.[5] Durch die Bürokratisierung der Bewertungsmechanismen wird Kontrolle über den Wert kultureller Wirtschaftsgüter ausgeübt. Eine Institution nützt Preise dazu, den eigenen Geschmack, die eigenen Richtlinien als den Status Quo zu etablieren.

<<(...) the prize had established itself as an instrument (an economic instrument, in the full sense of that term) eminently well suited to achieving cultural objectives along three main axes: social, institutional, and ideological.>>[6]

Preise haben sich somit als eine Art Brücke zwischen Wirtschaft und Kunst erwiesen. Nicht nur zu Zeiten der Weltwirtschaftskrise sind

[4] English, James F.: 2005, p.8 – 9.
[5] vgl. English, James F.: 2005, p.37.
[6] English, James F.: 2005, p.50.

Menschen widerstrebend, Geld in Dinge zu investieren, deren Erfolg so variabel scheint, wie der von kreativen Gütern. Preise dienen hierbei als Qualitätsmerkmale, die Investoren dazu motivieren, finanzielle Mittel fließen zu lassen. Ein Aspekt, welcher sich wie ein roter Faden durch die ganze vorliegende Arbeit zieht.
Der Pulitzer-Preis trägt fast alle der genannten Merkmale eines Preises für Kunst und Kultur und die folgenden Seiten beschäftigen sich mit den spezifischen Aspekten, die diesen US-amerikanischen Preis ausmachen.

I.2. Joseph Pulitzer

Joseph Pulitzers Lebensgeschichte spiegelt den amerikanischen Traum wider, wie er im 19. Jahrhundert von so vielen Einwanderern angestrebt wurde. Ein Blick auf seine Biographie sei in diesem Rahmen gewährt, da sein eigenes Leben das Vorspiel für den späteren Preis ist, welcher seinen Namen unsterblich machen sollte.
Joseph Pulitzer wurde als Sohn eines wohlhabenden jüdischen Vaters und einer strenggläubig christlichen Mutter am 10. April 1847 in Mako, Ungarn geboren. Seine Ausbildung genoss er an Privatschulen in Budapest, bis er sich mit 17 Jahren entschloss, Soldat zu werden. Nachdem ihn das österreichische Militär aufgrund seiner Sehschwäche und einem schlechten gesundheitlichen Zustand ablehnte, ging er nach Hamburg, wo er sich von einem Anwerber der U.S. Union Army verpflichten ließ.[7]
Nach einem Jahr in der Lincoln Caverly, einem Zweig des US Militärs, zog er 1865 nach St. Louis. Zu diesem Zeitpunkt war sein Englisch noch sehr mangelhaft und deshalb nützte er seine Zeit, um die Sprache zu lernen und sich rechtswissenschaftliches Wissen in der Mercantile Library anzueignen.
Dort beobachtete der junge Pulitzer zwei Männer während eines Schachspiels und nachdem er ihre Neugier mit einem scharfsinnigen Kommentar geweckt hatte, kamen sie ins Gespräch. Bei den beiden Schachspielern handelte es sich um zwei Redakteure der führenden deutschsprachigen Tageszeitung *Westliche Post.* Beeindruckt von dem

[7] vgl. Fischer, Heinz-D: 2003, p.1.

jungen Mann, boten sie ihm eine Anstellung an. Dort machte er sich binnen kürzester Zeit einen Namen als geschäftstüchtiger Journalist, bis ihm schließlich 1872 die Hauptanteile der Zeitung angeboten wurden, da die eigentlichen Besitzer kurz vor dem Bankrott standen. Mit 25 Jahren kaufte er die Anteile, verkaufte sie jedoch auf Grund von Unstimmigkeiten mit anderen Teilhabern bald wieder.[8]

Nach einem Aufenthalt in Europa und ein paar mehr oder weniger gelungenen Geschäften schaffte er es, 1879[9] Besitzer und Chefredakteur der aufstrebenden Zeitung *St. Louis Post – Dispatch* zu werden.

Pulitzer führte die *Post – Dispatch* zu großem Erfolg, wobei ihm die steigende Macht der Medien bewusst wurde, die er – nicht zuletzt – auch für eigene Intentionen (oder Interessen) nutzen wollte.

<<He learned quickly that by setting up his Post-Dispatch as a watchdog against privilege and a champion of „the people", he could advance his own interests by defending the public's.>>[10]

Pulitzer entschloss sich 1883 mit seiner Frau nach New York zu übersiedeln, als er bei einem Zwischenstopp zu einer geplanten Europareise von der Möglichkeit erfuhr, die bankrotte Tageszeitung *The New York World* zu kaufen. Nach dem Kauf bekam die Zeitung den Namen *The World* und wurde durch geringere Preise und sensationsreiche Schlagzeilen in kürzester Zeit zu der erfolgreichsten Tageszeitung der Vereinigten Staaten Amerikas.

Ein solcher Erfolg war natürlich nicht ohne die Anwesenheit von Neidern möglich, darunter war am prominentesten Charles Anderson Dana, der Herausgeber der Konkurrenzzeitung *The Sun*. Dana begann sogar antisemitische Kampagnen gegen Joseph Pulitzer auf den Seiten von *The Sun* zu publizieren. [11]

---

[8] vgl. Columbia University: Stand: 01.12.2009

[9] Unstimmigkeiten – www.pulitzer.org spricht von 1878, jedoch schreibt Heinz Dietrich Fischer in seinem Buch, dass Pulitzer 1878 die Zeitung *St. Louis Dispatch* gekauft hat und nach einer Verschmelzung mit dem Konkurrenzblatt *St. Louis Post*, ein Jahr später (also 1879) der alleinige Besitzer und Chefredakteur der *St. Louis – Dispatch* wurde.

[10] Bates, J. Douglas: 1991, p.63.

[11] vgl. Bates, J. Douglas: 1991, p.68 ff.

Ein weiterer Rivale von Joseph Pulitzer war William Randolph Hearst, Herausgeber von *The New York Journal.* Der erbitterte Auflagenkampf der beiden Herausgeber, prägte den Begriff des „yellow journalism“, benannt nach dem Comic Strip *The Yellow Kid* von Richard F. Outcault, welcher sowohl von Joseph Pulitzer als auch William Randolph Hearst gedruckt worden ist.

Nach dem Spanisch – Amerikanischen Krieg versuchte sich Pulitzer von dem „yellow journalism“ zu entfernen, da er viele Werbeaufträge durch unseriöse Schlagzeilen verloren hatte.[12]

Aufgrund eines Nervenzusammenbruchs im Jahre 1890, zog sich Pulitzer für den Rest seines Lebens ganz zurück und lebte abseits seiner Familie in extremer Stille und abgedunkelten Räumen. Er schaffte es jedoch, auch aus der Ferne und fast erblindet, auf die Medienwelt starke Einflüsse zu nehmen. Er ließ sich von Eingeweihten täglich Zeitungen vorlesen und arbeitete durch ein ausgeklügeltes Codesystem mit den Redakteuren seiner Zeitungen zusammen.[13]

<<Pulitzer’s loyal editor, John Cockerill, once called him “the greatest journalist the world has ever known.“ That is debatable, but it is safe perhaps to view Pulitzer as the most important journalist of American history. For better or worse he did more than any other individual to influence the nature of modern newspapers.>>[14]

I. 3. Columbia School of Journalism

Joseph Pulitzers letzte Lebensjahre waren geprägt von dem Wunsch ein bedeutungsvolles Erbe zu hinterlassen. Der Grundstein war seine Vision einer Schule für Journalisten, welche auch im Rahmen der berühmten Preise eine maßgebliche Rolle spielen sollte.

Pulitzer war der Meinung, dass noch vor Ende des Jahrhunderts, Journalismus Schulen die gleiche Akzeptanz erhalten würden, wie *Graduate Schools* für Medizin oder Rechtswissenschaften.[15]

Auf nationalem Niveau behielt Pulitzer gewissermaßen Recht, denn gegenwärtig gibt es in den USA unzählige universitäre Programme für

[12] vlg. Brian, Denis: 2001, p.210 ff.
[13] vgl. Columbia University: Stand: 01.12.2009
[14] Bates, J. Douglas: 1991, p.80.
[15] vgl. Pulitzer, Joseph: 1904, p.642.

zukünftige Journalisten, die sowohl preislich, als auch in Hinblick auf die Länge der Ausbildung den *Law Schools* oder *Medical Schools* gleichen. Gemeinsam mit dem damaligen Präsidenten der Columbia University, Seth Low, besprach er im Jahr 1892 die ersten Ideen für eine solche Ausbildungsstätte, doch die Umsetzung sollte noch eine Weile dauern:

<<Pulitzer, at the same time [1903], sensed that his health was not equal to the task, and it was he who proposed that the project be postponed until after his death. It meant so much to him that he could no resist the temptation to interfere at the point of each detail, and he felt sincerely that for the sake of his own health and the health of the School he must not permit himself to be so tempted.>>[16]

Somit war sein letzter Wille, dass eine Million Dollar an die Columbia University, wenn möglich noch während seiner Lebzeit, gehen würde, um eine Schule für Journalismus zu erschaffen. Frühestens sieben Jahre nach seinem Tod würde die Columbia University eine weitere Million bekommen, wenn die Schule für Journalismus für mindestens drei Jahre gut funktioniert hat. 1912, ein Jahr nach Pulitzers Tod, war es so weit und die Türen der *Columbia School of Journalism* wurden geöffnet.[17]
Da Pulitzer selbst nicht die nötigen Zeugnisse gehabt hätte, um auf eine Universität zu kommen, war es ihm wichtig, dass es die Möglichkeit gibt für talentierte Personen, auch ohne eine bestimmte Form der höheren Bildung, die *Columbia School of Journalism* besuchen zu können. Somit wurde ein zweijähriger berufsbildender Kurs eingerichtet, sowie ein vierjähriges Studium.[18]

I.4. Die „Academy Awards“

<<The Pulitzer Prize is the Academy Award of almost all American writing, including fiction, drama, biography, history, general nonfiction, and poetry as well as music.>>[19]

Die Schule für Journalismus sollte nicht Joseph Pulitzers einziges Erbe an die Nachwelt werden. In seinem Testament hielt er den Entwurf für eine Reihe von Preisen fest, die Exzellenz in den Bereichen Journalismus,

[16] Baker, Richard Terril: 1954, p.45.
[17] vgl. Fischer, Heinz-D: 2003, p.6 -7.
[18] vgl. Baker, Richard Terril: 1954: p.33.
[19] Bates, J. Douglas: 1991, p.4.

Kunst, Musik und Literatur ehren würden und von der *Columbia School of Journalism* administriert werden sollten. [20]

Es ist wahrscheinlich, dass Joseph Pulitzer den Nobelpreis als Vorbild hatte, welcher 1901 zum ersten Mal verliehen wurde und dem damals schon viel mediale Aufmerksamkeit zuteil wurde.[21] Pulitzer, wie Nobel, ging es vermutlich ebenfalls darum, der Welt in „guter Erinnerung" zu bleiben. So wie Alfred Nobel nicht primär als Erfinder des tödlichen Dynamits in die Geschichte eingehen wollte, wollte Joseph Pulitzer nicht für die nächsten Jahrhunderte als der Vater des Sensationsjournalismus gelten.

Joseph Pulitzer formulierte das Grundgerüst der Preise und Kategorien, wie Photographie, Poesie und Musik kamen erst im Laufe der Jahre hinzu. Die Preise sollten von der Columbia University verliehen werden, im Falle, dass die Ausbildungsstätte für Journalisten erfolgreich ist. Nach dem Jahre 1915, als die Journalismus Schule schon drei Jahre gut funktioniert hat, war es Zeit die weitere Million Unterstützung zu bekommen und den Plan, den Pulitzer in seinem Testament für seine Preise gemacht hat, in die Tat umzusetzen. Der Präsident der Universität, Nicholas Murray Butler, schickte einen Brief an die Mitglieder des Gremiums der *School of Journalism*, in dem er erklärte, er plane, die Preise ganz im Sinne von Joseph Pulitzer und seinem letzten Willen, zu verleihen.[22]

I.5. Das *Advisory Board*

Die Schaffung einer Bildungsstätte für Journalisten und die Vergabe eines Preises für herausragende Tätigkeiten in verschiedenen Bereichen, waren eng miteinander verbunden. Somit sollte es ein Gremium für die Entscheidung der Belange der *Graduate School of Journalism* geben, welches gleichzeitig auch die Preisträger des Pulitzer-Preises auswählt. Das *Advisory Board of the Graduate School of Journalism* sollte

---

[20] <<In the will, there were four journalism prizes, four for letters and drama, one for education, and five traveling scholarships, for a total of $16,500.>> Hohenberg, John: 1974, p.19.

[21] vlg. Firestone, Paul A.: 2008, p. xi.

[22] vgl. Baker, Richard Terrill: 1954, p.87.

sicherstellen, dass sowohl die Schule, als auch die Preisvergabe im Sinne Pulitzers weitergeführt werden.[23]

Die Ernennung der Mitglieder des Gremiums und die genaue Bezeichnung ihrer Tätigkeiten waren zu Beginn unklar:[24]

<<While numerous issues developed to delay the opening of the school and the awarding of the prizes, the heart of the crisis was the creation, the character and the personnel, and the powers of what was then called the Advisory Board of the School of Journalism (since 1950, the Advisory Board on the Pulitzer Prizes). Just why Pulitzer insisted on designating it as advisory in nature when in reality he wanted it to have complete power remains a puzzle to this day. Necessarily, the semantic confusion that was created at the outset contributed to some extent to the repeated clashes of temperament between Butler and Pulitzer.>>[25]

Joseph Pulitzer war es wichtig, dass das Board aus professionellen Journalisten besteht, um ein Verbindung zwischen einer akademischen Ausbildung und einem Berufsbild zu erstellen, welches bis Dato immer Distanz zu universitären Einrichtungen hatte.[26] Der Universität übergab er zwar die Verantwortung, die Kurse zu strukturieren, aber das Board sollte trotzdem eine wichtige Aufgabe übernehmen:

<<But in making of this plan the University shall be influenced by the advice and conclusions of an Advisory Board, composed of the foremost journalists and editors possessing expert knowledge on the subject. The members of the Board shall be appointed by the University upon the nomination of the Donor, excepting the President of the University who shall be ex-officio a member, and the Board shall have a continuing advisory relation to the school for a period of not less than twenty years.>>[27]

Somit begannen die Verhandlungen zwischen Joseph Pulitzer und Präsident Butler darüber, wer nun tatsächlich ein Teil des Gremiums sein sollte. Wirklich fest standen die Teilnehmer erst nach dem Tod Pulitzers, nämlich am 15. Januar 1912 bei ihrer ersten Versammlung: 11

[23] vgl. Bates, J. Douglas: 1991, p.195.
[24] vgl. Baker, Richard Terrill: 1954, p.31.
[25] Hohenberg, John: 1974, p.14.
[26] vgl. Hohenberg, John: 1974, p.14 ff.
[27] Baker, Richard Terril: 1954, p.36.

Journalisten der angesehensten Zeitungen des Landes und Präsident Butler der Columbia University.[28]*

Im Laufe der Jahre hat sich das Gremium immer mehr aus den Angelegenheiten der Schule zurückgezogen und somit wurde auch 1950 der Name von *Advisory Board of the Graduate School of Journalism* zu *Advisory Board on the Pulitzer Prizes* geändert. 1954 wurde entschieden, die Dauer der Mitgliedschaft des Gremiums auf vier mal drei Jahre zu verkürzen.[29]

In den späten 70er Jahren bekam das Gremium seinen bis heute gültigen Namen *Pulitzer Prize Board* und die Anzahl der Mitglieder wurde auf eine Anzahl von etwa 20 Mitgliedern erweitert und die Mitgliedsdauer auf drei mal drei Jahre beschränkt.[30]

Auf der Homepage des Pulitzer-Preises kann man die folgende Definition für die Formation des Gremiums finden:

> <<The 19-member board is composed mainly of leading editors or news executives from media outlets across the U.S., as well as four academics. The dean of Columbia's journalism school and the administrator of the prizes are nonvoting members. The chair rotates annually to the most senior member. The board is self-perpetuating in the election of members. Voting members may serve three terms of three years for a total of nine years.>>[31]

Die Mitgliedschaft inklusive aller Verpflichtungen des Gremiums erfolgt ohne finanzielle Vergütung – Prestige und Macht ist die Belohnung.[32] Die Mitglieder können ihre Nachfolger selbst bestimmen. Das erste weibliche, das erste nicht-weiße und sowohl das erste nicht-journalistische Mitglied, wurde erst im Jahr 1980 aufgenommen.[33]

---

[28] vgl. Baker, Richard Terril: 1954, p.57.

* In anderen Quellen wird meist von 13 Gremiums gesprochen, jedoch hat Baker in seinem Buch *A History of The Graduate School of Journalism. Columbia University* nur 11 Journalisten namentlich erwähnt, die bei der ersten Sitzung dabei waren.

[29] vgl. Hohenberg, John: 1974, p.229.

[30] vgl. Fischer, Heinz-D: 2003, p.10.

[31] vgl. Columbia University: Stand: 05.12.2009

[32] vgl. Bates, J. Douglas: 1991, p.200.

[33] vgl. Bates, J. Douglas: 1991, p.194 – 195.

I.6. Der Pulitzer-Preis für Drama

Joseph Pulitzer hat in seinem Testament folgende Kriterien für den Pulitzer-Preis für Drama festgehalten, welche in kommenden Jahren noch oft umformuliert werden sollten[34]:

> <<Annually, for the original American play, performed in New York, which shall best represent the educational value and power of stage in raising the standard of good morals, good taste, and good manners, One thousand dollars ($1000).>>[35]

Diese sehr anspruchsvollen Kriterien wurden oft kritisiert, da Joseph Pulitzer zu seinen Lebzeiten für kommerzielle Zwecke moralisch fragwürdig gehandelt hat, jedoch andere an moralisch strengen Standards gemessen hat. [36]

Vor allem die ersten Jahre des Pulitzer-Preises in den Kategorien *Drama* und *Novel* waren von vielen Kontroversen überschattet, da die ausgewählten Werke oft eher konventionell waren oder keinen hohen literarischen Anspruch hatten. Zwei Gründe dafür waren offensichtlich; der erste war Präsident Butler, dessen „puritanischer" Geschmack oft verhindert hat, dass die wirklich besten oder überragenden Stücke der amerikanischen Literatur geehrt wurden. [37]

So bekam *The Glass Managerie* von Tennesse Williams keinen Preis, obwohl es als eines der wichtigsten amerikanischen Theaterstücke gilt und auch das überaus bejubelte Stück *The Children's Hour* von Lillian Hellman wurde 1935 nicht geehrt, da es Homosexualität thematisiert. Da die amerikanische Theaterwelt schockiert war über solche Entscheidungen, entstanden unter anderem zwei weitere Preise als Reaktion darauf: Die *Antoinette Perry (Tony) Awards* der Amerikanischen Theaterindustrie und die *New York Drama Critics Circle* der New Yorker Theaterkritiker.[38] Doch gerade in der jüngeren Vergangenheit, glichen sich meist die Gewinner aller drei.

---

[34] <<The wording of the descriptions of the prizes has also been changed from time to time in the direction of greater clarity and precision.>> Baker, Richard Terril: 1954, p.92.
[35] Hohenberg, John: 1974, p.19.
[36] vgl. Bates, J. Douglas: 1991, p.59.
[37] vgl. Bates, J. Douglas: 1991, p.122.
[38] vgl. Bates, J. Douglas: 1991, p.127.

Ein weiterer Grund für die Unzufriedenheit der Theaterindustrie war natürlich auch, dass die Entscheidungsträger des Pulitzer-Preises, Menschen aus der Nachrichtenwelt, wenig mit dem Theater zu tun hatten und sich oft gegen die Entscheidungen ihrer Expertenjurys stellten.[39]

<<The annual award of the Pulitzer Prize for drama is frequently a source of irritation and resentment among people who earn their living in the theatre, they feel this is essentially a prize given by amateurs to professionals. They often question the Advisory Board's taste; more seriously, they question its credentials. Why on earth should a random group of editors feel qualified to identify for the best American play of the season, particularly when not all members of the group have always seen all of the eligible plays?>>[40]

Nach dem man im ersten Jahr des Pulitzer-Preises kein Stück gefunden hatte, welches den anspruchsvollen Kriterien des Gremiums entsprach und die Theaterwelt tatsächlich in einer Schaffenskrise steckte, wurde der erste Preis erst im Jahr 1918 an die Komödie *Why Marry?* von Jesse Lynch Williams verliehen.[41]

Damals hatte der Pulitzer-Preis jedoch noch nicht den gleichen Stellenwert, den er ein paar Jahre später schon haben sollte. Der erste Pulitzer-Preis für Drama wurde nur mit zwei Paragraphen in der *New York Times* bedacht. Es sollte noch ein paar Jahre dauern, bis der Preis nationale (sowie in Folge internationale) Aufmerksamkeit erhalten würde und Stoff für hitzige Diskussionen lieferte. [42]

1963 kam es zu einem Eklat, welcher die Art und Weise, wie das Gremium das „beste Stück" auswählt, verändern sollte. In diesem Jahr wurde Edward Albees Stück *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* von den zwei Expertenjuroren[43] des Jahres als Gewinnerstück dem Board empfohlen. Da es angeblich jedoch nicht „uplifting" („erbaulich") genug war, wurde es abgelehnt. Es folgte ein kleiner Medienskandal.

---

[39] vgl. Bates, J. Douglas: 1991, p.124.
[40] Thoohey, John L.: 1967, p. vii.
[41] vgl. Fischer, Heinz-D: 2003, p.232 – p.233.
[42] vgl. Thoohey, John L.: 1967, p.5.
[43] US Theaterkritiker John Mason Brown und John Gassner haben, als Reaktion auf die Entscheidung des Gremiums ihre Empfehlung nicht wahrzunehmen, ihre Tätigkeit als Juroren niedergelegt.
vgl. Thoohey, John L.: 1967, p.326.

<<As a result of the turmoil that followed, the board agreed that all members henceforth would abstain from passing judgement on any book they had not read or any play they had not seen-and unintended admission of irresponsibility that left critics fuming. The board also voted to delete the „uplift" provision from the rules-but too late to benefit Albee's play.>>[44]

Linda Winer, Theaterkritikerin der Zeitung *Newsday* and mehrfaches Pulitzer-Preis-Jury-Mitglied beschreibt ihre Sicht auf das Gremium wie folgt:

<< I think the board has an awesome responsibility, I think that, I know that they are journalists. They are editors and publishers. And there are times when its very frustrating and you know that journalists – people who are not really theater people make the decisions and sometimes it doesn't the way we wanted it as a panel.>>[45]

Trotz vieler Kritik hat das Pulitzer-Preis Board Eugene O'Neill, von vielen als der herausragendste amerikanische Dramatiker angesehen, mit vier Auszeichnungen geehrt, so wie *Driving Miss Daisy* von Alfred Uhry entdeckt, welches in seiner Filmversion sogar mit vier Oscars honoriert wurde.[46]

Heute wird Pulitzer-Preis für Drama offiziell so definiert:

<<Columbia University awards the Pulitzer Prize in Drama annually on the recommendation of The Pulitzer Prize Board, which acts on the nominations of a distinguished committee of Pulitzer Drama Jurors. The award is announced during the Spring.>>[47]

I.7. Die Jury

Da das Gremium des Pulitzer-Preises kaum in allen Sparten das nötige Vorwissen hat, gibt es in jeder Kategorie eine Expertenjury. Die Identitäten dieser Jurymitglieder waren ursprünglich geheim und wurden erst ab 1957 publik gemacht.[48] Das genaue Auswahlverfahren der Jurymitglieder ist etwas undurchsichtig:

---

[44] Bates, J. Douglas: 1991, p.128.
[45] Interview mit Linda Winer: Anhang, p.175.
[46] vgl. Bates, J. Douglas: 1991, p.126 ff.
[47] siehe Anhang: Pulitzer Prize in Drama von Columbia University: Stand: 10.12.2009
[48] vgl. Hohnberg, John: 1974, p.349.

<<The route to becoming a Pulitzer Prize juror is somewhat as mystical and serendipitous as being selected to join an elite secret society.>>[49]

Linda Winer, die selbst acht Mal Jurymitglied war und fünf Mal den Juryvorsitz hatte, antwortete auf die Frage, wie sie Jurymitglied geworden war <<The original time I was just called.>>[50] ohne zu wissen, wer sie vorgeschlagen hatte.

Laut dem *Plan for the Award of the Pulitzer Prizes*, welcher auf der Homepage des Pulitzer-Preises zu finden ist, werden die Jurymitglieder der jeweiligen Kategorie von dem Board selbst bestimmt. Somit gibt das Board zwar zu, dass es in den verschiedenen Kategorien Unterstützung braucht, doch sucht es sich diese Unterstützung natürlich nach eigenem Ermessen aus. J. Douglas Bates fasst die Wege, ein Jurymitglied zu werden, in seinem Buch *The Pulitzer Prize* so zusammen:

<<One sure way is to become good friends with a member of the board. A more practical way, however, is to win a Pulitzer Prize.>>[51]

Somit ist das Pulitzer-Preis System voll und ganz selbstregulierend. Die Gruppe von Journalisten, die das Board ausmachen, entscheiden, wer in den Jurys sitzen soll. Vor allem in den journalistischen Spaten sitzt meist ein Pulitzer-Preis gekrönter oder zumindest nominierter Autor. Andrew Schneider, ein mehrfach Pulitzer-Preis prämierter Journalist, nannte dieses Prinzip selbst <<“a bit incestuous.“>>[52]

Laut dem offiziellen online Statement haben die Jurymitglieder die folgenden Aufgaben:

<<They are invited to exercise their independent and collective judgment and submit three nominations. The Nominating Jurors are advised that their nominations are for the information and advice of The Pulitzer Prize Board only inasmuch as the Board is charged with the responsibility and authority under the will of Joseph Pulitzer to select, accept, substitute or reject these nominations, and may in extraordinary circumstances offer its own. Each Nominating Jury should submit to the Board three nominations in its category. These must be listed in

[49] Bates, J. Douglas: 1991, p.161.
[50] Interview mit Linda Winer: Anhang, p.170.
[51] Bates, J. Douglas: 1991, p.161.
[52] Bates, J. Douglas: 1991, p.162.

alphabetical order and each of the three must be accompanied by a statement as to why the jury believes that this particular entry merits a Pulitzer Prize. It is not a part of the jury's charge to offer its preferences among its three nominees.>> [53]

Die Anzahl der Jurymitglieder ist im Laufe der Jahre von ursprünglich zwei auf heute fünf Mitglieder gestiegen, um ein faireres Urteil zu ermöglichen.[54] Die Zusammensetzung ist wie folgt:

<<For the drama prize, a jury, usually composed of three critics, one academic and one playwright, attends plays both in New York and the regional theaters. The award in drama goes to a playwright but production of the play as well as script are taken into account.>>[55]

Jedoch handelt es sich immer nur um eine Empfehlung der Jury denn die Mitglieder des Gremiums behalten sich natürlich das Recht vor, ein ganz anderes Stück zu prämieren oder in einem Jahr gar keinen Preis zu verleihen. So kommt es auch oft zu starken Unstimmigkeiten, wie im zuvor beschriebenen Aufsehen rund um Edward Albees *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?.*

Jedes Jurymitglied bekommt eine bescheidene Aufwandsentschädigung von $2000 und der Vorstand der Jury $2500[56]. Hierbei ist natürlich Prestige, Macht und die Liebe zum Theater die treibende Motivation. Die Erwähnung der Funktion als Jurymitglied des Pulitzer-Preises in der eigenen Biographie ist auch an sich Qualitätsmerkmal und Statussymbol.[57]

I.8. Das Auswahlverfahren

Schon seit Anbeginn gab es Kontroversen um den Pulitzer-Preis für Drama, vor allem, da es keine universellen Kriterien gibt, nach welchen man die Qualität eines Theatertextes objektiv untersuchen kann,

[53] Columbia University: Stand: 10.12.2009
[54] vgl. Fischer, Heinz-D: 2003, p.10.
[55] Columbia University: Stand: 10.12.2009
[56] vgl. Columbia University: Stand: 10.12.2009
[57] vgl. vgl. English, James F.: 2005, p.122.

abgesehen von den rigiden Richtlinien, die Aristoteles in seiner *Poetik* für das Drama festgehalten hat.[58]

Produktionen, die innerhalb eines Kalenderjahres in den USA entstanden sind, von einem US-Staatsbürger geschrieben wurden und sich vorzugsweise mit amerikanischem Leben auseinandersetzten, haben jährlich die Chance den Pulitzer-Preis für Drama zu gewinnen. Die Einsendung soll sechs Kopien des Stückes beinhalten, eine Videoaufnahme der Produktion ist von Vorteil. Die Teilnahme erfolgt kostenlos. In der Kategorie Drama gibt es jedoch eine besondere Ausnahme: um für den Preis in Frage zu kommen, muss das Stück nicht offiziell eingereicht werden. Die Jury bezieht auch Stücke ein, die sie unabhängig gesichtet hat und welche nicht eingeschickt wurden, jedoch den zuvor genannten Kriterien entsprechen. Der Abgabeschluss ist immer der letzte Tag des Jahres.[59]

In meinem Interview mit dem ehemaligen Jurymitglied Linda Winer, fragte ich sie, ob sie denn wirklich alle der etwa 70 bis 80 eingesendeten Stücke lesen würde und darauf antwortete sie:

> <<I really do. I mean this is somebody's life's works. And this is a prize – if any prize is supposed to have integrity, this one is and I think that when I sign on for it, I read all the plays.>>[60]

Die fünf Jurymitglieder entscheiden untereinander, welche drei Stücke sie nominieren und der Juryvorstand hält in einem ausführlichen Schreiben die Gründe für die Nominierungen fest. Die Jury soll keine explizite Empfehlung beinhalten, allerdings machen Formulierungen den Favoriten offensichtlich.[61] Die Reihung der Stücke erfolgt in dem Schreiben alphabetisch, um eine Favorisierung zu erschweren.[62]

Innerhalb des Gremiums gibt es noch weitere Unterkommissionen für gewisse Bereiche wie Musik und Drama, die, die Diskussionen in diesen Bereichen leiten. Allgemein gilt, dass die Mitglieder nur dann abstimmen, wenn sie die nominierten Stücke auch gelesen bzw. gesehen haben. Die

---

[58] vgl. Firestone, Paul A.: 2008, p. xiii.
[59] vgl. Columbia University: Stand: 10.12.2009
[60] Interview mit Linda Winer: Anhang, p.173.
[61] vgl. Weber, Bruce: Stand: 14.12.2009
[62] vgl. Linda Winer Interview: Anhang, p.174.

Empfehlung bekommt das Stück aufgrund der Mehrheit der Stimmen des Gremiums.[63]

Meist schließt sich das ganze Board der Nominierung der Unterkommission an und „empfiehlt" geschlossen das Gewinnerstück des Jahres und der Präsident der Columbia Universität gibt den Preisträger, sowie die Finalisten bekannt.[64]

Chris Boneau, Chef von Boneau/Bryan-Brown, der größten PR-Firma des Broadway, beschreibt den Tag, an dem die Gewinner und Finalisten des Pulitzer-Preises bekannt gegeben werden, wie folgt:

> << I love that Monday that the Pulitzer are announced at 3 o'clock because I have it down to a science on what to do, I also know whether it's a year I am going to be busy or not (…).I have to call the two playwrights to say where will you be at 3 o'clock because we have a whole system in place, where we roll phone calls and we have the *New York Times* standing by to talk to them and everybody is sort of ready to do press and take a picture and all those things.>>[65]

Im Mai jeden Jahres werden die Sieger in einer Zeremonie während eines großen Mittagsmahls an der Columbia Universität geehrt und bekommen dort ihr Zertifikat, sowie einen Check für das Preisgeld, welches heutzutage $10 000 beträgt.[66] Die berühmte Siegermedaille wird nur an die Zeitung verliehen, die in der Kategorie *Public Service* gewinnt.[67]

Der Pulitzer-Preis für Drama wurde seit seinem Entstehen 1917, 78 Mal verliehen, 15 Mal hielt das Pulitzer-Preis Gremium kein Theaterstück des Jahres für herausragend genug.[68] Einige Autoren waren öfters nominiert und manche haben sogar wiederholt gewonnen: August Wilson, Thornton Wilder, George S. Kaufman und Tennessee Williams haben jeweils zwei Mal gewonnen. Edward Albee und Robert Sherwood haben je drei Pulitzer-Preise für Drama bekommen und Eugene O'Neill ist mit vier Pulitzer-Preisen der meist geehrte Dramatiker.[69]

---

[63] vgl. Columbia University: Stand: 10.12.2009
[64] vgl. Bates, J. Douglas: 1991, p.195.
[65] Interview mit Chris Boneau: Anhang, p.117.
[66] vgl. Columbia University: Stand: 10.12.2009
[67] vgl. Columbia University: Stand: 10.12.2009
[68] vgl. Columbia University: Stand: 10.12.2009
[69] vgl. Columbia University: Stand: 10.12.2009

I.9. Das Pulitzer-Preis Stück

Eine Sichtung zahlreicher Pulitzer-Preis-Stücke lässt gewisse Gemeinsamkeiten erkennen. Aufgrund der Grundvoraussetzung, vom amerikanischen Leben zu handeln, drehen sich die meisten Stücke um Familiendramen. Natürlich gibt es Ausnahmen wie das Gewinnerstück des Jahres 2009 *Ruined* von Lynn Nottage, welches sich mit der Kriegshölle des Congo auseinandersetzt. Linda Winer beschreibt die Wichtigkeit des „amerikanisch-seins" des Stückes wie folgt:

<<But if it is by an American playwright processed for an American audience, I think it is American enough. I don't get hysterical over whether it is about or not American themes, everything doesn't have to be Shenandoah[70] - how boring that would be.>>[71]

Eine weitere Ähnlichkeit vieler Stücke ist die geringe Anzahl der Charaktere. Dies ist ein Aspekt, welcher die Produktion des Theaterstücks erleichtert, da die Kosten mit jedem Schauspieler steigen, ohne die Einnahmen zu erhöhen. Dies ist allerdings weniger eine Pulitzer-Preis-Eigenart, sondern eher ein Merkmal der amerikanischen Theaterszene, wenn nicht ein globales Problem neuer Theaterstücke. Elizabeth I. McCann, Produzentin zahlreicher erfolgreicher Broadway – Produktionen, sieht die Situation sehr einengend für Dramatiker:

<<And so, they are restricted very much by the economics of the theatre today. Only so many actors. And they start thinking that way. When they get down at the typewriter, they figure, well, I'd better write this play for three people before I send it out.>>[72]

In meinem Interview mit Terence Lamude, New Yorker Theaterregisseur und Regisseur der europäischen Premiere von *Proof* von David Auburn im Vienna English Theater, meint, Charakteristiken eines typischen „Pulitzer Stücks" zu erkennen:

<<(…) there is a certain type of play that the Pulitzer as a committee seems to award the best drama to and it tends to be what I call

[70] Film aus dem Jahr 1965 Regie: Andrew V. McLaglen, 1974 gleichnamiges Musical
[71] Interview mit Linda Winer: Anhang, p.179.
[72] London, Todd: 2009, p.40.

“middlebrow”, which are interesting plays always with curious subject matter and it’s usually very American about American life but it also, it flatters the audience, in this case [Anmerk. *Proof* von David Auburn] because of mathematics, it flatters the audience into thinking that it is more intelligent than it actually is.>[73]

Auch Chris Boneau kommt zu einer ähnlichen Erkenntnis:

<<Which I think is another key about Pulitzer play, is that, (…) if the playwright is so smart that he makes you feel smarter when you leave the theater, that is, that’s a sign of a good writer at work, period. But also it’s also a sign of a good Pulitzer Prize winning play.>>[74]

Stilistisch gesehen, tendieren die Pulitzer-Preis-Gewinner dazu, naturalistisch zu sein und zugänglich für eine breitere Masse. Linda Winer begründet dies auch damit, dass die eigentlichen Entscheidungsträger, die nicht Menschen des Theaters sind, einen Zugang zu den Stücken brauchen: <<It[75] would be better understood by the people making the decisions.>>[76]

I.10. Nationaler/Internationaler Stellenwert

Der Pulitzer-Preis ist zu einem internationalen Qualitätsmerkmal geworden. Dass dies natürlich lediglich amerikanische Autoren (mit minimalen Ausnahmen in manchen Kategorien[77]) betrifft, ist ein Aspekt, der international wenig Erwähnung findet, vor allem auch im Vergleich zum Nobelpreis, der nationalitätsunabhängig verliehen wird. Dieser Aspekt führt, wie John F. English beschreibt, dazu, dass einer sozialen Gruppierung, in dem Fall einer landesspezifischen Gruppe, ein Vorrang gegeben wird. Hier kann eine Ähnlichkeit zu den wohl bekanntesten Filmpreisen der Welt, den Academy Awards, gezogen werden, die sich in

[73] Interview mit Terence Lamude: Anhang, p.148.
[74] Interview mit Chris Boneau: Anhang, p.126.
[75] Musical *In the Heights* im Vergleich zu *Passing Strange*
[76] Interview mit Linda Winer: Anhang, p.180.
[77] <<Only U.S. citizens are eligible to apply for the Prizes in Letters, Drama and Music (with the exception of the History category in Letters where the book must be a history of the United States but the author may be of any nationality). For the Journalism competition, entrants may be of any nationality but work must have appeared in a U.S. newspaper published at least once a week, on a newspaper's Web site or on an online news organization's Web site.>> Columbia University: Stand: 10.12.2009

ihrer Preisverleihung fast ausschließlich auf US-amerikanische Werke beziehen, auch wenn dies nicht in den Statuen als Kriterium beschrieben wird. Doch die Kategorie „Best Foreign Language Film“ zeigt klar, wie gesondert ausländische Filme wahrgenommen werden.

Das Talent, einen Preis medienwirksam zu vermarkten, führt dazu, den Markt besser kontrollieren zu können. Preise wie der Oscar oder der Pulitzer-Preis scheinen die Vormachtstellung amerikanischer Kunstschaffender und ihrer Investoren zu sichern, unter dem Deckmantel innovative Künstler zu fördern.

Einige professionelle Theatermacher und Theaterkritiker schreiben dem Pulitzer-Preis einen künstlerisch fragwürdigen Stellenwert zu, nicht zuletzt dafür, dass, wie in Kapitel I.6. erwähnt, die definitiven Entscheidungsträger dem Theater gegenüber Amateure sind. Trotz dieser Kritik kann man den Einfluss des Preises nicht ignorieren. Publikationshäuser wie *Plume*, ein Geschäftszweig der *Penguin Group*, oder *TCG Books*[78], kleben nicht nur einen Sticker auf den Buchdeckel, sondern lassen eine Plakette mit den Worten „Winner of the Pulitzer-Prize“ gleich auf das Cover drucken.

Russel Baker, selbst zweifacher Gewinner des Pulitzer-Preises,[79] sagte während seiner Ansprache zum 75. Jubiläum des Pulitzer-Preises im Jahre 1991:

> <<From now on every time your see your name in print it will be proceeded by ‚Pulitzer Prize winner'.>>[80]

In Hinblick auf seine ständige Namensnennung scheint der Wunsch Joseph Pulitzers nach einer gewissen Unsterblichkeit in Erfüllung gegangen zu sein.

J. Douglas Bates hat den Stellenwert des Pulitzer-Preises für Drama in seinem Buch *The Pulitzer Prize* wie folgt zusammengefasst:

---

[78] TCG = Theatre Communications Group ist eine nationale Organisation für amerikanisches Theater, die 1961 gegründet worden ist und seit 30 Jahren auch Theaterstücke verlegt. Siehe: http://www.tcg.org/

[79] Russel Baker gewann seinen ersten Pulitzer 1979 in der Journalismuskategorie *Commentary* als Journalist der *New York Times* und erhielt den zweiten Preis 1983 in der Kategorie *Biography or Autobiography*. In den Jahren 1986 bis 1994 ein Mitglied des *Adivortory Board*.

[80] Mandl, Bette: 2002, p.91.

<<For a play, winning the Pulitzer can mean the difference between box-office success and failure. That has become so much the case that Broadway producers have begun adding incentive provisions to playwright's contracts, offering them profit bonuses if their shows garner the Pulitzer (and, in some cases, the Antoinette Perry Award-Tony). The Pulitzer can rescue a foundering production or revive one that has closed. And the prize can propel a play into a movie deal, as acknowledged by Richard and Lili Zanuck, producers of the film version of Alfred Uhry's Pulitzer-winner, *Driving Miss Daisy.*

For playwrights, like authors of books, winning the Pulitzer can be a shortcut to money and recognition.>>[81]

Dem Preis eilt weltweit ein guter Ruf voraus, doch laut PR Chef Chris Boneau, ist der Tony Award während der eigentlichen Spielsaison von größerer Bedeutung. Einen Monat vor der eigentlichen fernsehübertragenen Preisverleihung werden die Nominierungen preisgegeben, Aspekte die laut Boneau den Ticketverkauf deutlich steigern. Das mediale Interesse an dem Pulitzer-Preis ist etwas geringer:

<<I mean think about the Tony awards, you have a month from the day the nominations are announced to the day when the award ceremony happens. The Pulitzers happen in a 24 hour window, again it's a smallish, in some ways old fashioned, I mean they have a ceremony but it's private, there is no big televised program, there are the coverage of it has diminished severely, the New York Times used to devote an entire page to it and unless they, the New York Times wins a bunch of Pulitzers, they don't do a lot of coverage of it and it used to be that you could expect a nice juicy interview with the playwright, who won and the book person, who won the non-fiction writer and the composer but now they do these little boxes and you are lucky if they even use a picture.>>[82]

Terence Lamude machte während seiner Regiearbeit an *Proof* in Wien eine andere Erfahrung:

<<I asked them why they were not in the advertising saying that it also won the Tony award, which in some ways is big box, bigger office value in this country than the Pulitzer because the Tony is televised. And they told me the Tony award means nothing in Vienna, so they said but the Pulitzer does.>>[83]

---

[81] Bates, J. Douglas: 1991, p.10.
[82] Interview mit Chris Boneau: Anhang, p.119.
[83] Interview mit Terence Lamude: Anhang, p.150.

Für Autoren selbst scheint der Pulitzer-Preis von größerer Bedeutung zu sein. David Auburn, Gewinner beider Preise, bestätigte dies in dem im Anhang beigefügten Interview: <<It's [Anmerk. Der Pulitzer-Preis] the most important prize.>>[84] Nicht zuletzt auch deshalb, weil der Pulitzer-Preis für Drama ein Preis nur für den Autor ist, wogegen der Tony an die Produktion geht und somit an Autor und Produzent verliehen wird.
Neil Simon[85] hat in einem Interview gemeint, obwohl er mehr Drehbücher als Theaterstücke geschrieben hat, wird auf ihn trotzdem immer als <<the playwright, Neil Simon.>>[86] verwiesen, was er dem Einfluss des Pulitzer-Preises zuschreibt.[87]

[84] Interview mit David Auburn: Anhang, p.88.
[85] Neil Simon hat 1991 den Pulitzer-Preis für *Lost in Yonkers* gewonnen und auch das dazugehörige Drehbuch geschrieben, welches 1993 von Columbia Pictures produziert wurde und unter der Regie von Martha Coolidge verfilmt wurde.
[86] Mandl, Betty: 2002, p.91.
[87] vgl. Mandl, Betty: 2002, p.91.

II. Film – der nächste Schritt der Evolution?

II.1. Der Pulitzer-Preis für Drama – ein Filmpreis

Wie zuvor erwähnt, gibt es bis zum heutigen Tag[88], 78 Theaterstücke die mit dem Pulitzer-Preis geehrt wurden. Von diesen 78 Gewinnerstücken gibt es laut *The Internet Movie Data Base (http://www.imdb.com/)* mindestens 82 Verfilmungen. Diese sind primär amerikanisch, jedoch wurden beispielsweise basierend auf dem Gewinnerstück von 1945, *Harvey* von Mary Chase, alleine vier deutschsprachige Fernsehfilmversionen veröffentlicht. Somit ist die Dunkelziffer der fremdsprachigen Verfilmungen von Pulitzer-Preis gewinnenden Stücken wahrscheinlich noch höher.

Doch auch 82 ist eine beeindruckende Zahl, denn somit gibt es sicherlich mehr Filme, als Theaterstücke, die auf Pulitzer-Preis gekröntem Material basieren. Dieses Faktum unterstützt die These, dass der Einfluss des Pulitzer-Preises weiter reicht, als sein ursprünglicher Wirkungsbereich, was auch aus dem Zitat von J. Douglas Bates, welches ich im vorigen Kapitel angeführt habe, hervorgeht.

Trotz der zahlreichen Verfilmungen haben es nur zwei Pulitzer-Preis prämierte Stücke als Filme geschafft, den bekanntesten Filmpreis, den Oscar, in der Kategorie *Best Picture* zu bekommen: *You Can't take it with You*[89]*,* welches 1937 den Pulitzer-Preis bekam und 1938 von Frank Capra[90] verfilmt wurde; sowie *Driving Miss Daisy,* Gewinnerstück des Jahres 1988 und 1989, das von Bruce Beresford verfilmt wurde. Alfred Uhry hat sein Stück selbst adaptiert und erhielt hierfür auch den Oscar für *Best Writing, Screenplay Based on Material from Another Medium* – er ist bis jetzt der einzige, dem dies gelang.[91]

Gerade in den letzten 20 Jahren wurden Filme, die auf Pulitzer-Preis Stücken basieren, überspitzt fast schon als *art house films*[92] gehandelt.

---

[88] 5. Januar 2010.

[89] Das Theaterstück stammt von Moss Hart and George S. Kaufman.

[90] Er gewann ebenfalls den Oscar für *Best Director*.

[91] Andere wie z.B. Jon Patrick Shanely für *Doubt: A Parable* waren für einen Oscar in dieser Kategorie nominiert, aber haben nicht gewonnen.

[92] <<An art film (also called "art cinema", "art movie"" or "art house film") is typically a serious, noncommercial, independently made film or a foreign language film that may have these qualities, but may have been made by a major

Indiz dafür sind die Firmenprofile der Produktionsfirmen, wie *The Weinstein Company* oder *HBO Films*, sowie die vergleichsweise geringeren finanziellen Erfolge, trotz oft gelobter Besetzungsentscheidungen.

Auch wenn Pulitzer-Preis adaptierte Stücke in ihrer Filmversion nicht immer den gleichen Erfolg bei Kritikern hatten, ist es nicht weit her geholt zu behaupten, dass die Chancen auf eine gut besetzte Verfilmung steigen, wenn der Preis an das Theaterstück verliehen wurde.

Der Pulitzer-Preis hatte in seiner Konzeption kaum filmwirtschaftliche Strategien im Sinne, dennoch ist er zu einem potenten Werkzeug geworden, um Finanziers zur Unterstützung zu bewegen. Doch welchen Strategien folgen Adaptionen, mit welchen Schwierigkeiten haben sie zu kämpfen und welche Vorteile bringen sie mit sich?

II.2. Die Wurzel der Adaption

<<....translations are like wives: they can be faithful but not beautiful or beautiful but not faithful, never both.>>[93]

Die Idee, einen Roman oder ein Theaterstück in bewegte Bilder zu verwandeln ist so alt wie das Kino selbst[94]. Anfänglich waren die Filme kaum länger als eine Minute und deshalb ist es <<surprising how many attemps were made to concentrate the meat of a popular novel or play into a flickering minute or two.>>[95]

Die ersten Filmemacher haben sich an bekannte, angesehene literarische Vorlagen angelehnt und Film anfänglich kaum mehr als ein technisches Mittel mit dem bedeutende Geschichte neu erzählt werden konnten. Filmsoziologe Siegfried Kracauers Sentenz hierzu lautet:

---

company in its home territory and achieved popular success. It may thus be aimed at a niche audience, rather than a mass audience,[1] or the use of subtitles in foreign language films may limit audience appeal.>> Wales, Jimmy: Stand: 31.Dezember 2009

[93] Kranz, David L. und Mellerski, Nancy C.: 2008, p.1.

[94] <<Most film historians mark the beginning of modern cinema on December 28, 1895, when the Lumière brothers used the Cinématographe to show a program of ten silent films at the Grand Café in Paris.>> Desmond, John M. und Hawkes, Peter: 2006, p.9-10.

[95] [Even so it is...] Gifford, Denis: 1991, p.vii.

<<As soon as the movies learned to tell stories, they began to film the classics.>>[96]

Da bekannte Geschichten verfilmt wurden, gelang es schnell, das relativ neue Medium der breiten Mittelschicht näher zu bringen. Ein Plan, der funktioniert hat, wodurch Film, an der Anzahl der Zuschauer gemessen, zu der dominierenden Kunstform in der westlichen Welt geworden ist.[97] Laut den Autoren und Professoren der Anglistik, John M. Desmond und Peter Hawkes beruht ein Drittel aller kommerziell produzierten amerikanischen Filme auf dem Text einer anderen literarisch veröffentlichten Gattung, wobei diese Filme meist den größten Erfolg haben.[98]

Da Film immer schon viel auf Adaptionen beruht hat, hat sich schnell die Frage der Treue zum Urmaterial gestellt, welches meist literarischer oder dramatischer Natur ist. Denn in jedem Fall wird eine Geschichte von einem Medium in ein anderes übertragen und dabei werden Umsetzungsentscheidungen getroffen, die auf eine Interpretation des Urmaterials schließen lassen. Somit ist der „Film" nicht nur eine bloße Darstellung des Originals.[99] An den <<filmbegleitenden Etikettierungen „from" oder „based on", „nach", „frei nach" oder „nach Motiven">>[100] erkennt man, dass auch in <<der Produktionspraxis keine verbindlichen Umsetzungsregeln existieren.>>[101].

Ein Grund für diese „Untreue" und dem lockeren Verhältnis zu dem Material ist mitunter, dass in dem Prozess einer Filmproduktion mehr Personen involviert sind. Ein Roman ist eine private Beziehung zwischen dem Autor und dem Leser, welche im Idealfall höchstens durch einen Lektor oder einen Herausgeber reguliert wird. Bei einem Theaterstück <<it's basically you [der Autor] and the director.>>[102], hat Neil Simon gemeint und in dem selben Interview auch gesagt, dass bei der

[96] Braun, Michael und Kamp, Werner: 2006, p.7.
[97] vgl. Kranz, David L. und Mellerski, Nancy C.: 2008, p.1.
[98] vgl Desmond, John M. und Hawkes, Peter: 2006, p.2.
[99] vgl. Desmond, John M. und Hawkes, Peter: 2006, p.2. und vgl. Kranz, David L. und Mellerski, Nancy C.: 2008, p.1.
[100] Schwab, Ulrike; 2006, p.32.
[101] Schwab, Ulrike; 2006, p.32.
[102] Mandl, Bette: 2002, p.91.

Entstehung eines Films immer auch die Meinungen der zahlreichen Leute, die ein Filmstudio leiten, miteinbeinbezogen werden müssen.[103]
Weiters berichtete Neil Simon, dass er Szenen oft während der Proben umgeschrieben hat[104]; eine Praxis, die bei dem Dreh eines kommerziell erzeugten Spielfilms unmöglich ist, da jeder einzelne Drehtag mit unglaublich hohen Kosten verbunden ist.[105] Die hohe Anzahl der in den Produktionsprozess einbezogenen Menschen und die immense finanzielle Investition stehen auch in Verbindung damit, den Film einem Millionenpublikum näher zu bringen. Ulrike Schwab bringt in *Erzähltext und Spielfilm* die Folgen dieser Einflüsse auf das Folgekunstwerk „Filmadaption" so auf den Punkt:

> <<Die implizierte Reichweite des Spielfilms bedingt in der Regel bei der Filmadaption Popularisierungseffekte, wie sie den ästhetischen Normen des Kinos entsprechen. Änderungen gegenüber der Vorlage antizipieren kinematographisch geprägte Zuschauererwartungen. Mag im Ursprungswerk der Ernst der Problematik im Vordergrund stehen, kann im Zweitwerk das Moment der Unterhaltung zunehmen oder Starpräsentation dominieren. Die kommerzielle Ausrichtung des Spielfilms hat mit den Gütekriterien, die speziell für die klassische Literatur gelten, nicht vieles gemein. Die Entscheidung über ein Adaptionsprojekt, d.h. die Wahl eines literarischen Ausgangswerk, ist weniger vom individuellen Wunsch eines Regisseurs oder Drehbuchautors abhängig als von der Verfügbarkeit der Rechte.>>[106]

II.3. Adaptionen – wieso?

Es gibt natürlich idealistische Gründe einer literarischen Verfilmung – einerseits schafft man es, wie schon erwähnt, eine größere Anzahl von Menschen zu erreichen, auch bietet die Transformation in ein anderes Medium eine künstlerische Herausforderung. Die filmische Adaption schafft es im besten Fall, ein bildungstechnisch als wichtig angesehenes Bühnenwerk in seiner „Essenz" der breiten Masse zugänglich zu machen.
Ebenso ist der Drang der „Verewigung" des Stoffes, das Festhalten des Moments der Emotion, welches im Theater einzigartig und identisch nie wiederholbar ist, das Ziel.

---

[103] vgl. Mandl, Bette: 2002, p.91.
[104] vgl. Mandl, Bette: 2002, p.92.
[105] <<Shooting costs could easily amount to $500,000 a day for 100 days.>> Wales, Jimmy: Stand: 08.01.2009
[106] Schwab, Ulrike: 2006, p.30.

Doch die dominierende Motivation eines Autors, sein Bühnenwerk zu adaptieren oder adaptieren zu lassen, ist schlicht der finanzielle Aspekt. Bühnenautoren[107], auch jene, die mit dem Pulitzer-Preis geehrt wurden, finden keine gesicherte finanzielle Existenz lediglich durch das Verfassen von Theaterstücken. Sie sind deshalb gezwungen, andere materielle Einkünfte zu finden, oft unterrichten sie parallel[108] oder <<because to make a living I also write for television and film.>>[109], wie Wendy Wasserstein[110], denn auf die Frage, ob sie davon leben kann, Dramatikerin zu sein, hat sie schlicht <<No.>>[111] geantwortet.
Robert Schenkkan[112] hat in einem Interview den Grund der Verfilmungen so zusammengefasst:

> <<their [Anmerk.: Dramatiker] most fervent wish seems to be that they can sell the rights of their plays to the movies for a large sum to support their playwriting habit for a couple of years.>>[113]

Grund dafür ist eine geringe finanzielle Stärke der Theater, wie auch Schenkkan in dem gleichen Interview sagt. Er kennt kein Theater in den USA, welches nur von den Einkünften der Theaterkassen überleben könnte. Sie müssen auf Förderungen und Spenden hoffen, welche natürlich primär von dem Privatsektor kommen, da die staatliche Förderung für Theater und Kunst generell in den USA äußerst schwach ist. Deshalb sind diese Theater auch vorsichtiger mit ihren Produktionen und für Autoren ist es unglaublich schwierig, neue Stücke auf die Bühne zu bringen.[114]

> <<Most share a sense that new work is financially riskier and harder to fund, with some exception for world premieres, than work on classics, musicals, and familiar titles with bankable stars.>>[115]

---

[107] Obwohl dies mit höchster Wahrscheinlichkeit auch für europäische Dramatiker gilt, beziehe ich mich im Rahmen dieser Arbeit mit meinen Quellen nur auf US Amerikanische Autoren.
[108] vgl. Bryant, Tom: 2002, p. 121.
[109] Czekay, Angelika: 2002, p. 48.
[110] Pulitzer-Preis für Drama 1989: *The Heidi Chronicles*
[111] Czekay, Angelika: 2002, p. 48.
[112] Pulitzer Preis für Drama 1992: *The Kentucky Cycle*
[113] Bryant, Tom: 2002, p. 122.
[114] vgl. Bryant, Tom: 2002, p. 121 – 124.
[115] London, Todd: 2009, p. 19.

Die Scheu von Theatern, sich an neues Material zu wagen, aufgrund berechtigter finanzieller Ängste, drängt Dramatiker immer mehr an die Grenzen der Armut. Die 2009 veröffentlichte Studie des Theatre Development Fund zeichnet ein tristes Bild für professionelle Dramatiker:

> <<Financially speaking, there is no way to view playwriting as anything but a profession without an economic base. It's not a romantic notion that playwrights must be prepared to be poor. It's a sad fact.>>[116]

In diesem ewigen Überlebenskampf der Kunst ist es auch verständlich, dass ein Dramatiker seine Stückrechte verkaufen möchte, und er tut dies wahrscheinlich auch in der Hoffnung, dass die folgende Adaption ähnliche Erfolge haben wird wie *Driving Miss Daisy*[117] von Alfred Uhry oder *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*[118] von Tennessee Williams.

David Auburn hat in unserem Interview gesagt, dass das Beste, was man über Adaptionen von Theaterstücken sagen kann ist, dass sie es schaffen, Schauspieler anzuziehen und somit Darstellungen festzuhalten, die der Nachwelt sonst entgangen wären. Als besonders herausragend erwähnt er Marlon Brandos Darstellung von Stanley in *A Streetcar Named Desire*[119] von Tennessee Williams.[120]

Hochkarätige Besetzungen sind tatsächlich ein Merkmal Pulitzer-Preis gewinnender Stücke. Meryl Streep[121], welche in der *Vanity Fair* Ausgabe Januar 2010 als <<best actress of her generation>>[122] bezeichnet wurde, war in der letzten Verfilmung des Pulitzer-Preis gewinnenden Stücks, *Doubt: A Parable*[123] von John Patrick Shanley, zu sehen. Für die

---

[116] London, Todd: 2009, p. 50.
[117] Pulitzer-Preis für Drama 1988, Oscar 1990 in der Kategorie *Best Picture*
[118] Pulitzer-Preis für Drama 1955, laut www.the-numbers.com ist die Verfilmung aus dem Jahr 1958, an den Einnahmen der Kinokassen gemessen, die erfolgreichste Adaption eines Pulitzer-Preis gewinnenden Stücks.
[119] Pulitzer-Preis für Drama 1948 und 1951 von Tennessee Williams und Oscar Saul adaptiert und von Elia Kazan verfilmt.
[120] vgl. Interview mit David Auburn: Anhang, p.95.
[121] Meryl Streep war in zahlreichen anderen Verfilmungen zu sehen, die auf Pulitzer-Preis gekrönten Romanen basieren, sowie in der umjubelten *HBO Miniseries* basierend auf *Angles in America* von Tony Kushner, Gewinner des Pulitzer-Preises des Jahres 1993.
[122] Bennets, Leslie: 2010, p.64.
[123] *Doubt: A Parable* von John Patrick Shanley, Pulitzer-Preis für Drama 2005

Verkörperung von *Sister Aloysius Beauvier* wurde sie auch mit ihrer 15.Oscar Nominierung belohnt.
Die filmische Adaption scheint, wenn nicht das direkt angestrebte, dann doch zumindest das erhoffte Ziel im Dasein eines dramatischen Textes zu sein.

II.4. Film und Fernsehen – die Retter des Theaters

Theater war nicht immer eine Kunstform, die nur durch Spenden und Förderungen am Leben gehalten werden konnte. Einst war auch das Theater ein kommerziell erfolgreiches Geschäft, welches gut von den Einnahmen durch Theaterbesucher leben konnte. Heute sind Spenden und Förderungen notwendig, um eine amerikanische Theaterlandschaft zu erhalten, da es nahezu kaum staatliche Unterstützung gibt.
Als Film Anfang des 20ten Jahrhunderts immer populärer wurde, meinte einer der ersten Filmtheoretiker, Hugo Münsterberg[124], dass Theater aussterben würde. Aber auch wenn es seit dem Film etwas ruhiger um das Theater geworden ist, lebt es noch immer. Doch auch die kommerziellen Theater des Broadway würden ohne gewisse willige Investoren/Spender nicht in der Lage sein, ihre aufwendigen Produktionen auf die Bühne zu bringen, denn, nachdem alle Gehälter der beteiligten Personen ausbezahlt wurden, bleiben meist keine Einkünfte für die Geldgeber übrig. Diese Förderer des Theaters beschrieb Chris Boneau, Chef von Boneau/Bryan-Brown, der größten PR Firma des Broadway in dem von mir geführten Interview wie folgt:

> <<They are random people and they often are rich, yes, I don't know that all of them are always rich but they tend to invest their money, their disposable income in a different way, so rather than playing the stock market or playing the horses or doing ponzi schemes, they probably enjoy, they love the theater and to them going to the opening party and meeting a celebrity and being able to say to their friends, to their family or to their associates, that they have invested in a Broadway>>[125]

Laut Boneau gibt es durchaus auch Theaterstücke, die es schaffen, einen tatsächlichen Gewinn zu erzielen, doch, wenn man sich den Spielplan der

[124] 1863 - 1916, deutsch-amerikanischer Psychologe und Philosoph.
[125] Interview mit Chris Boneau: Anhang, p.112.

Broadwaytheater ansieht, wird einem auch hier klar, dass die ausverkauften Theaterstücke von einem anderen filmischen Mittel leben – den Hollywoodstars. Theaterstücke müssen am Broadway auch vor allem mit den übermächtigen Musicals konkurrieren, die mit aufwendigen Bühnenshows und bekannten Titeln oft die ganze Familie anziehen.
Somit haben es besonders Theaterstücke von noch unbekannten Autoren sehr schwer und brauchen viel Pflege, da sie ohne einen bekannten Titel bzw. Namen und ohne Stars auskommen müssen. Diese haben ihre Premiere meist off-Broadway oder in regionalen Theatern, und oft kommt es dann zu keinen weiteren Produktionen:

<<On average, though, playwrights have only one or two plays professionally produced three times or more, a significantly low number – proof that the American theatre suffers from what has been deemed "premiere-itis", that is, the overvaluing of first productions and devaluing of subsequent ones. (...) "Premiere-itis" undercuts the ability of theatre writers to maintain an income stream over time from royalties.>>[126]

Damit ein Theaterstück tatsächlich überlebt und somit auch weiterhin aufgeführt wird, ist ein erfolgreicher Lauf in New York fast unabdinglich, wie auch Regisseur Terence Lamude in dem von mir geführten Interview sagte:

<<You can't get a grant for doing a play someone else did the premier of, so occasionally it may get an other production, usually because a co-production has been agreed to beforehand. The only chance it gets to survive, a play, is if it gets done in New York. It gets the *New York Times* review and it has a bit of a run in New York, then everyone wants to do it. And sadly that's the way it works.>>[127]

Besonders geprägt von der Finanzkrise, müssen Theater sich um so genannte „Grants" kümmern, da die Unterstützung aus der Privatwirtschaft stark abgenommen hat. Dem folgend wird vermehrt auf konventionelles bzw. schon erprobtes Theater gesetzt.
Das Theaterwesen in Amerika hat sich in den letzten 40 Jahren stark verändert, in den 60ern und 70ern waren die Autoren noch im Mittelpunkt

[126] London, Tood: 2009, p.56-57.
[127] vgl. Interview mit Terence Lamude: Anhang, p.155.

des Geschehens. Theaterbetriebe wie die Circle Repertory Company[128], hatten Autoren und andere Künstler unter Vertrag mit wöchentlichen Gehältern. Diese Überlebenssicherheit hat natürlich eine kreative Freiheit mit sich gezogen. Heute sind Theater zu kommerziellen Unternehmen geworden, was künstlerische Entwicklungen hemmt. Ein Aspekt, welcher in der im Jahr 2009 erschienen Studie *outrageous fortune – the life and times of the new american play* von Todd London[129] analysiert wird und Theatermacher zu Wort kommen lässt:

<<You can't have an artistic system be corporate, because all the corporation is about is making money. The current system neither makes money nor produces good art, so we're in a terrible bind. I don't see a way out of it.>>[130]

In dem heutigen amerikanischen Theatersystem, welches lieber auf berühmte Stücke, pompöse Musicals und Hollywoodstars zurückgreift, müssen die eigentlichen Theaterleute bereit sein, auch abseits der Bühne Möglichkeiten zu finden, Geld zu verdienen.
Deshalb stellen das Fernsehen und der Film, die durch ihre unvergleichliche Reproduzierbarkeit ein Massenpublikum bedienen, eine wichtige Industrie für die Künstler des Theaters dar. David Auburn hat auf meine Frage hin, ob Film und Fernsehen, das Theater am Leben erhalten, folgende Antwort gegeben:

<< Yeah, I mean, you know, to an extent certainly financially they are and that is not just true for writers, it's also true for actors. No one has done more for the New York theater than the creator of "Law & Order", I mean more New York actors are able to survive because of that TV-show than any foundation or any other, you know, financial intervention, it is not a trivial thing, it's huge. I mean, you know, I think there will always been theater, technology is really not a big factor in the survival of the theater. I think people will always put on plays and they always will. The circumstances of it might change but yeah a lot of good writers are able to keep writing plays because they have TV and movie work.>>[131]

[128] << est. Jul 14, 1969 - closed. Oct 4, 1996 New York, New York, USA>> The Broadway League: Stand: 31. Januar 2010
[129] mit Ben Pesner und Zannie Giraud Voss.
[130] London, Todd with Pesner, Ben and Giraud Voss, Zannie: 2009, p.5.
[131] Interview with David Auburn: Anhang, p.99.

Ohne staatliche Unterstützung für die Kunst, müssen Autoren, Regisseure, Schauspieler etc. bereit sein, gewisse Kompromisse einzugehen, um sich vor allem in den teuren amerikanischen Metropolen das eigene Leben finanzieren zu können, auch wenn sie im Theater große Erfolge feiern. Eine Realität, der sich besonders Autoren stellen müssen:

<<Although approximately half of playwrights' total income came from playwriting-related activities – teaching, TV and film writing, and such – only 15 percent of that income came from their plays.>>[132]

II.5. Theater und Film[133] - eine unendliche Beziehung

Bevor eine Adaption exemplarisch untersucht wird, gilt es, gewisse diskursrelevante Merkmale der beiden Gattungen festzuhalten, um zu zeigen wo sie sich ähneln und wo sie sich unterscheiden.

Theater und Film teilen an sich viele Gemeinsamkeiten. Beide Kunstgenres werden zu den performativen Künsten gezählt und verbinden in ihrer kommerziellen Form Dialog und Handlung[134]. Es gibt viele Berufssparten die sich in den Bereichen doppeln bzw. Menschen, die in beiden Disziplinen tätig sind oder von einer Sparte in die andere wechseln.

Weiters sind die klaren Gemeinsamkeiten und die Vorlieben für dramatische Texte damit verbunden, dass die ersten Filmemacher und Schauspieler, sowie zahlreiche technische Mitarbeiter, ursprünglich am Theater zuhause waren und <<ihre Erfahrungen und Arbeitsweisen auf das neue Medium übertrugen.>>[135]

Nimmt man jedoch eine Theateraufführung und filmt diese, wird bei späterer Betrachtung klar, dass die „Magie des Moments" verloren gegangen ist und ein zuvor als gut wahrgenommenes Schauspiel,

---

[132] London, Todd: 2009, p.53.

[133] <<Film ist ein Oberbegriff, der jegliche filmische Darbietung umfasst. Verweist man auf den Film als Erzählung einer Geschichte mit filmspezifischen Mitteln, müßte man daher korrekterweise „Spielfilm" sagen. Der Kürze halber wird in dieser Arbeit mit „Film" ausschließlich der Spielfilm bezeichnet; andere nichtfiktionale Gattungen wie der Dokumentarfilm werden stets explizit benannt.>> Schlickers, Sabine: 1997, p. 12.

[134] Ich spreche hier von klassischem Theater und schließe Musicals und andere performative Gruppierungen wie *Blue Man Group* u.ä. aus, da eine Einbeziehung nur vom Diskurs ablenken würde.

[135] Schlickers, Sabine: 1997, p.12.

plötzlich steif und „unecht“ wirkt. Dies liegt daran, dass beide Kunstformen, trotz ihrer Gemeinsamkeiten, anderen „Gesetzen“ gehorchen, andere Limitationen haben und andere Aspekte als „real“ darstellen können:

<<Raum, Zeit und Handlung bedeuten im Film etwas anderes als die klassischen aristotelischen Kategorien in der Literatur oder im Theater. So wird die Raum-Zeit-Kontinuität der Bühne im Film in Einstellungsfolgen parzelliert, kann die Zeitfolge z.B. in Parallelmontagen verräumlicht werden, ist die Filmhandlung durch die Kamera mehr oder minder deutlich fokalisiert.>>[136]

In diesem Sinne der Möglichkeiten, Raum und Zeit zu durchbrechen, scheint Film dem Roman näher zu stehen als dem Theaterstück. Gene D. Phillips, English Professor der Loyola Universität in Chicago begründet dies in seinem Buch *Conrad and Cinema. The Art of Adaptation.*:

<<First of all, let me point out that, in general, cinema has more in common with fiction that with any other form of literature. One might be tempted to suppose that film is closer to drama than to fiction, since a play – like a motion picture – is acted out before an audience. But the similarity really ends there. Both a novel and a film depend more on description and narration than on dialogue, while in a play the emphasis is reversed.>>[137]

Theater ist Kunst. Doch Film musste lange gegen das Vorurteil ankämpfen <<es sei ein kulturell minderwertiges Produkt und nur eine Ware für den Massenkonsum.>>[138] Dieser Minderwertigkeitskomplex des Films gegenüber dem Theater ist nicht unbegründet, da Film ursprünglich als Jahrmarktsattraktion bekannt wurde und sich seinen Status als Kunstwerk, im Vergleich zu Literatur und Theater, erst erarbeiten musste.[139]
Film hat die Möglichkeit, Situationen und Konflikte in nahezu reellen Umfeldern und unter extrem lebensnahen Umständen darzustellen, wie es dem Theater nicht möglich wäre. Das Theater setzt auf <<sensory appeal of theater – its ability to communicate to all five senses of the audience>>[140], welches als lebensechter gelten kann und lebt, wie Goethe

[136] Braun, Michael und Kamp, Werner: 2006, p.7.
[137] Phillips, Gene D.: 1995, p.3.
[138] Weber, Alfred: 1988, p.1.
[139] vgl. Schlickers, Sabine: 1997, p.18.
[140] Knopf, Robert: 2005, p.7.

gesagt hat, von der „Wahrheit des Moments." Robert Knopf[141] schreibt über den eminentesten Unterschied, in dem von ihm herausgegebenen Buch *Theater and Film,* folgendes:

> <<At base, we can probably all agree that theater is live and exists in the moment, whereas film consists of a performance or story preserved, indeed most would say *constructed,* on celluloid.>>[142]

Zuschauer erwarten und akzeptieren andere Dinge auf der Bühne als im Film. Am Theater gibt es zahlreiche Komponenten, die das Publikum als Teil der Illusion annimmt, ohne das Geschehen als weniger tatsächlich zu empfinden: laute Sprechstimmen, eine dem Publikum zugewandte Form der Bewegung und der Positionierung, sowie wenige Ortswechsel, eine beschränkte Zahl der teilnehmenden Charaktere und die Akzeptanz des Imaginären und für den Zuschauer nicht Ersichtlichen. Theater findet im Gegensatz zum Film stets in einem klar abgegrenzten Raum statt. Es entsteht eine Enge, die der Beobachter sieht und spürt. Der Zuschauer ist toleranter, wenn es darum geht, illusionäre Dinge zwar zu durchschauen, jedoch nicht als unglaubhaft zu deklarieren.[143] Ein weiterer wichtiger Unterscheidungspunkt ist, dass das Theater aufgrund seiner Unmittelbarkeit verschwindet, sobald die Vorstellung zu Ende ist und seine greifbaren Spuren nur in Form Theaterstücken[144] hinterlässt, wobei die Spur, die der Film hinterlässt der Film selbst ist.[145]

---

[141] Robert Knopf ist der Vorstand des Instituts für *Theater and Dance* and der State University of New York in Buffalo und Autor zahlreicher Bücher.
[142] Knopf, Robert: 2005, p.7.
[143] z.B.: Im Rahmen einer Theaterproduktion ist es meist akzeptabel, Schnüre eines fliegenden Engels wahrzunehmen, jedoch im heutigen Film wäre dies undenkbar und würde die Illusion zerstören.
[144] <<The practice of reading plays is a modern usage, with its origins, arguably in the writing of such modern dramatists as Henrik Ibsen and August Strindberg, who consciously made even their stage directions (which would never be heard by an audience) more literate and literary, with the awareness that their plays would be read as a thing apart from any performance. The costume of making the stage play concurrently a reader's text is apparent in the writing practices of contemporary playwrights as diverse as Tennessee Williams, David Mamet, and Sam Sheppard.>> Cahir, Linda Constanzo: 2006, p.144.
[145] vgl. Knopf, Robert: 2005, p.6.

<<Der Film wurde zur prototypischen Kunstform im Zeitalter der technischen Reproduzierbarkeit.>>[146]

Am Theater werden Momente als Ganzes wahrgenommen. Der Zuschauer sieht in einer Konfliktsituation in den meisten Fällen gleichzeitig beide Parteien und kann sich so aussuchen, wen er genauer beobachten möchte, auch der Regisseur mit seiner Inszenierung dies ein wenig manipulieren kann. Im Film kann ein Regisseur mit Nahaufnahmen den Blick des Rezipienten direkt lenken und somit auch, wie dieser die Geschichte wahrnehmen soll.
David Auburn, der im Jahr 2007 bei dem von ihm geschriebenen Film *The Girl in the Park* Regie geführt hat, hat in unserem Interview zu den Unterschieden des Geschichtenerzählens zwischen Film und Theater folgendes gesagt:

<<Movies seem to be a lot less tolerant, movies seem to be able to communicate ideas faster than a play, so that, minor characters in the movie for example, which from my playwriting experiences I would have felt I needed to set up in order to pay off for their narrative purpose. You have a scene with this character here, establishes it the character in the audiences mind, so that later when you meet them and they do the thing they are really there do to do you understand who they are and so forth. Movies seem to work differently; you don't need to establish a character in the same way. A glimpse, one shot, a look can establish the person in a way that is completely sufficient for the audience's needs. Lessons like that I learned a lot, mostly in editing, because you have material that you find completely surplus that was intended to help the audience and they were already there, ahead of you, you didn't need it.>>[147]

Durch die statische Betrachtungsweise eines Theaterstücks, ist der Dialog das Hauptwerkzeug eines Bühnendramas. Auf die Frage, warum er in erster Linie Theaterstücke schreibt, hat Horton Foote in einem Interview dies geantwortet:

<<And I think, because my inclination is always to tell things through dialogue, that it's the most natural form.>>[148]

[146] Braun, Werner und Braun, Michael: 2006, p.7.
[147] Interview mit David Auburn: Anhang, p.98.
[148] Brian, Crystal: 2002, p.207.

Wendy Wasserstein hat es noch simpler formuliert und gesagt, sie mag Theater, <<because I like dialog.>>[149] Im Gegensatz dazu war Film lange Zeit stumm und wurde nur durch Klavierspieler in den Kinos begleitet bzw. boten Schallplatten eine musikalische Unterstützung. Somit ist die Bildgebung die essentielle Eigenschaft von Film .[150]

<<After all, one of the most basic elements of the cinema is the telling of a story as visually as possible, Hitchcock went on: "to embody the action in the juxtaposition of images that have their own specific mlanguage and emotional impact – that is cinema.">>[151]

Dem amerikanischen Kinospielfilm und dem Sprechtheater liegen jeweils Manuskripte zugrunde, auf denen die dargestellte Handlung mehr oder weniger basiert. Die Macht des geschriebenen Wortes und seines Autors ist jedoch am Theater stärker zu spüren, da es das Medium der Autoren ist, auch wenn es sich nicht in den Gagen widerspiegelt. [152]

II.6. Theaterstück = Kunstwerk, Drehbuch = Anleitung

Das Endprodukt „Theater" lebt zwar von seiner Augenblicklichkeit, der Theatertext ist jedoch die Verewigung der Geschichte. Ein Theaterstück wird im Idealfall geschrieben, um immer wieder von Künstlern des Theaters neu aufgegriffen und interpretiert zu werden.
Das Drehbuch im Gegensatz dazu, hat nur eine kurze Lebensdauer und ihm wird im Vergleich zum Theaterstück ein geringer literarischer Wert beigemessen, da es nicht als Lesetext sondern mehr als Anleitung gedacht ist:

<<Mit seiner Sprache fixiert das Drehbuch nur, was optisch und akustisch sinnfällig wird. Die Konzeption von Handlung und Charakteren schlägt sich nicht in belaborierter Beschreibung nieder. Sie wird vielmehr vorweggenommen und manifestiert sich in Figurenaktionen und Dialog ausschließlich als Resultat. Es ist die Reduziertheit der sprachlichen Informationen in Verbindung mit technischen Grunddaten, die es dem professionellen Rezipienten, dem Regisseur, gestattet, einen Ansatz zur Visualisierung für die filmische Erzählung zu erkennen und auszugestalten. Davon abgesehen kann die Sprache des Drehbuchs zu

[149] Czekay, Angelika: 2002, p. 47.
[150] vgl. Cahir, Linda Constanzo: 2006, p.45.
[151] Phillips, Gene D: 1995, p.2.
[152] vgl. Czekay, Angelika: 2002, p.49.

diesem Zweck auch literaturnah beschaffen sein, in dem sie durch Suggestivität eindringliche Szenenbilder evoziert. Aufgrund seiner Mittlerfunktion aber stellt das Drehbuch keine literarische, sondern eine intermediale ‚Textart' dar, die auf eine spezifische Verwertung ausgerichtet ist und einen spezifischen Leserhorizont voraussetzt.>>[153]

Durch die stärkeren finanziellen Mittel der Filmindustrie, verdienen erfolgreiche Drehbuchautoren zwar mehr als erfolgreiche Dramatiker, doch kulturgeschichtlich hat sich der Regisseur als filmischer Autor durchgesetzt.[154]

David Auburn, Autor des Pulitzer Preis gewinnenden Stücks *Proof* hat in dem von mir geführten Interview zu der Frage der Autorenschaft folgendes gesagt:

<<I mean as the playwright, the playwright's relationship to their work in the theater is very much like the directors relationship to their work in the film, so it's the whole culture of playwriting in theater is set up theoretically to realize the playwrights vision, where as film is about the directors vision.>>[155]

Gewisse Filmregisseure sind auch nicht filmaffinen Menschen bekannt, nicht zuletzt durch eine gewisse Berühmtheit, die sie medial erreichen. Drehbuchautoren sind der breiten Masse jedoch eher unbekannt. Am Theater scheint dies umgekehrt zu sein. Erfolgreiche Bühnenautoren sind auch noch lange nach ihrem Tod durch das Wiederaufleben ihrer Stücke die künstlerischen Schöpfer der Geschichten. William Shakespeare sei hier wohl nur das prominenteste Beispiel. Theaterregisseure erreichen seltener den gleichen Bekanntheitsgrad und werden auch nicht in der gleichen Weise mit den Stücken identifiziert, wie es Filmregisseure in Verbindung mit ihren Filmen sind. Indiz ist hierfür ein simples Betrachten davon, wie Theaterstücke und Filme angeworben werden.

An einem Drehbuch, und noch verstärkter an Fernsehserien, arbeiten meist mehrere Autoren bzw. werden Drehbücher oft von anderen Autoren umgeschrieben. Die Macht der Filmstudios und Produzenten spielt auch hierbei eine große Rolle und formt die Geschichte in gewissem Sinne.

---

[153] Schwab, Ulrike: 2006, p.97-98.
[154] vgl. Schwab, Ulrike: 2006, p.98.
[155] Interview mit David Auburn: Anhang, p.85.

Die Treue zum Wortlaut spielt dann in der Umsetzung im Film meist eine geringere Rolle, da vor allem die Nähe zum realen Sprachgebrauch wichtig ist. Schauspieler haben mehr Möglichkeiten, Dialoge so zu formulieren, wie es ihnen selbst in den Sinn kommen würde.[156]

Aufgrund der unterschiedlichen realen Handlungsorte und der großen Budgetdifferenzen folgen Theaterstücke und Drehbücher anderen formellen Richtlinien. Kurz gesagt, finden moderne Theaterstücke meist an möglichst wenigen Orten, mit möglichst wenigen Figuren statt und beinhalten weniger, jedoch längere Szenen. Dies bedeutet geringere Auf- und Umbauzeiten, sowie niedrigere Produktionskosten. Drehbücher hingegen bestehen meist aus kurzen Szenen, die an verschiedenen Orten spielen und viele Chancen für Perspektivenwechsel bieten. Dies führt wieder zu den Urunterschieden von Film und Theater zurück: das Drehbuch kann durch seine technischen Mittel mehr Details zeigen, das Theaterstück muss mehr beschreiben.

Die literarische Wertigkeit des Drehbuchs und des Theaterstücks wird differenziert wahrgenommen. In den meisten Fällen werden einige der im Drehbuch niedergeschriebenen Szenen sich nicht wieder im Film finden. Oft wird erst bei Sichtung des gedrehten Materials klar welche Szenen für den Film von tatsächlicher Bedeutung sind und welche nur schon Gesagtes „doppeln“ würden und deshalb raus geschnitten werden. So heißt es auch, dass das Drehbuch erst fertig ist, wenn der Film fertig gestellt ist. Ähnlich wie auch das eigentliche Theaterstück erst fertig ist bei der Premiere seiner Erstaufführung.[157]

In diesem Sinne stehen sich das gedruckte Theaterstück und der fertige Film in ihrer Reproduzierbarkeit und Unveränderbarkeit gegenüber ähnlich wie Theaterautor und Filmregisseur. Ein Vergleich zwischen Theateraufführung und fertigem Film ist somit unzureichend. Eine Theateraufführung ist ein individueller Umgang mit einem dramatischen Text. Man könnte Theateraufführungen besser mit verschiedenen

[156] Es gibt klarerweise Ausnahmen bei welchen Regisseure an dem genauen Wortlaut hängen, doch im Allgemeinen ist der genaue Wortlaut im Film von geringerer Bedeutung als am Theater.

[157] Wobei manche Autoren in später veröffentlichten Ausgaben auch gewisse Änderungen vornehmen.

Schnitten eines Filmes vergleichen, beispielsweise der „Director's cut" im Gegensatz zu der Kinoversion. Hier wird in beiden Fällen vorhandenes Material spezifisch verwendet um ein performatives Kunstwerk zu kreieren.

II.7. Entstehungsprozess

Das „in-Aktion-setzen" der Geschichte funktioniert bei Film und Theater nach ganz anderen Parametern aufgrund von unterschiedlichen technischen, finanziellen und ästhetischen Gegebenheiten.
Theaterstücke haben in der Regel eine Probenzeit von 4 bis 8 Wochen[158], in welcher der Regisseur eng mit den Schauspielern gemeinsam das Stück „erarbeitet" und probt, bis es dann im Idealfall bei der Premiere ein vollständiges Kunstwerk ist. Dies soll schließlich möglichst identisch über einen gewissen Zeitraum hinweg aufgeführt werden. In der Probenzeit setzt sich der Regisseur mit anderen künstlerischen Mitarbeitern auseinander – wie Kostümbildner, Lichttechniker usw. Auch wenn Produzenten gewisse Einwände oder Vorschläge haben, ist es doch der Regisseur (und möglicherweise der Autor), der die künstlerische Kontrolle hat.[159] Die intensivste Arbeit erfolgt mit den Schauspielern in der Auseinandersetzung mit dem Text. Eine Treue zu dem geschriebenen Dialog wird am Theater noch immer stark beibehalten, was selbst Dramatikerinnen wie Wendy Wasserstein beeindruckt:

> <<You know, I'll never forget, in *The Heidi Chronicles*, Joan Allen coming up to me and saying: "Do you mind if I say an 'a' instead of a 'the' here?">>[160]

Die Proben verlaufen möglichst chronologisch und das eigentliche Werk, die Live- Darbietung auf der Bühne, wird während der Aufführung in der zeitlichen Abfolge des Theatertextes dargestellt. Während der Proben neuer Stücke, sind die Autoren meist ein Teil des Prozesses und

---

[158] Natürlich gibt es auch Stücke, die einen längeren Probenzeitraum haben bzw. über Monate hinweg nur an Wochenenden geprobt werden etc. 4 – 8 Wochen ist jedoch ein fairer Richtwert.
[159] vgl. Mandl, Bette: 2002, p.91.
[160] Czekay, Angelika: 2002, p.49.

schreiben gewisse Szenen um oder fügen neue Sequenzen ein. Neil Simon beschreibt den Prozess:

<<And I have the opportunity of sitting in at every single rehearsal and coming in the next day with rewrites on every play that I've ever done. You can't do that with film. If you go on the set and they shoot it, you don't go home and rewrite it. They say, "Sorry, we've done that. We have to move on to the next piece.">>[161]

Noch während der Aufführungszeit kommt es durch die schlichte Unwiederholbarkeit des Moments immer wieder zu leichten Abweichungen der Darbietung bzw. verändern Regisseure oder Schauspieler gewisse Dinge der Performance, wenn sie es für nötig halten.
Bei der künstlerischen Erarbeitung müssen die Darsteller es schaffen, die gleichen Emotionen Vorstellung für Vorstellung zu replizieren, um jedem Zuschauer die gleiche Qualität bieten zu können. Die Stimmen der Schauspieler müssen einen Raum ausfüllen können[162] und die Positionierung auf der Bühne ist meist dem Zuschauer entgegen gerichtet.
Im Film ist die menschliche Reproduzierbarkeit des Moments von geringerer Bedeutung. Schauspieler müssen zwar in der Lage sein, Szenen identisch aus den verschiedenen Kameraperspektiven zu spielen, aber eine „perfekte" Einstellung kann genügen, um die einzigartige Emotion für die Nachwelt einzufangen. Der Drang nach der Echtheit des menschlichen Verhaltens ist im Film stärker ausgeprägt, da der Film versucht, unsere Realität[163] zu beschreiben.
Am Theater wird versucht, mit den Mitteln der Bühne eine Entsprechung für die Realität zu finden, Zuschauer müssen sich mehr „wegdenken" als bei einem Film, der versucht, die Illusion vorzutäuschen, die Kamera hätte nur das wahre Leben gefilmt.

[161] Mandl, Betty: 2002, p.91 – 92.
[162] Es kommt auch im heutigen Sprechtheater zum Gebrauch von Mikrophonen, jedoch ungleich seltener als im Film.
[163] Abgesehen von Sciencefiction-Filmen, die ganz neue Welten erschaffen, welche auch anderen Gesetzen des menschlichen Verhaltens folgen können.

II.8. Rezeption

Ursprünglich wurde Film wie Theater für ein kollektives Publikum gemacht, welches sich gemeinsam das Stück ansieht. Dies mag heute zwar noch in der Intention gültig sein, jedoch wird, „the small screen“, Fernsehen, primär alleine oder im familiären Rahmen[164] konsumiert. Und durch verbesserte Heimkinotechniken werden auch für „the big screen“ gemachte Filme, in vielen Fällen auf DVD oder per „on demand“ von Privatfernsehsendern oder aus dem Internet heruntergeladen, oft abgesondert rezipiert. Theater ist und bleibt eine <<communal experience as opposed to a solitrary experience>>[165].

Es ist diese Gemeinsamkeit des Publikums und der Künstler im Moment, welcher für die Zuschauer das Theaterspektakel zu einer einzigartigen Erfahrung machen. Heute sind in London und New York viele berühmte Hollywoodschauspieler auf der Bühne zu sehen und diese ziehen natürlich auch ein großes, zahlungswilliges Publikum an.

Doch egal wie groß dieses Publikum an jedem Abend ist, wird es natürlich nicht mit dem Massenpublikum eines Kinofilms mithalten können, der durch seine technische Reproduzierbarkeit ungleich mehr Menschen erreichen kann.

Die Filmindustrie spielt somit in den USA eine große wirtschaftliche Rolle:

> <<Movie-making is big business. It is expensive, arguably the most expensive art form. [...] The film industry in America is a huge financial enterprise, a multi-billion dollar industry, with film outstripping aircraft parts, agricultural products, and computer components as our largest national export, accounting for the largest single factor in reducing America’s national trade deficit.>>[166]

Film und Theater bedienen auch oft ein unterschiedliches Publikum. Theater wird zwar heute in den USA schon mit *Facebook* und *Twitter* beworben, doch gerade bei den jüngeren Zuschauern kommt es

---

[164] Abgesehen von Fernsehevents wie großen Sportveranstaltungen, Preisverleihungen etc. wo sich oft ganze Schaaren vor riesigen Fernsehleinwänden zusammenfinden.

[165] Herrington, Joan: 2002, p.75.

[166] Cahir, Linda Constanzo: 2006, p.72.

irgendwann der Wendepunkten, er entscheidet ob Theaterabende ein Teil ihres kulturellen Lebens werden oder nicht.[167]

Theater und Film sind journalistischer Kritik ausgesetzt. Doch die Auswirkungen schlechter Kritiken sind für das Theater weit ernster als sie je für einen Film sein könnten. Der offensichtlichste Grund ist, dass eine Theateraufführung nur Personen aus einem bestimmten regionalen Umkreis anzieht, wobei diese auch meist die gleichen Publikationen lesen. Ein kommerziell produzierter Film wird gleichzeitig national, beziehungsweise international, in vielen Kinos gezeigt und somit gehen schlechte Kritiken leichter unter:

<<To a playwright, the importance of journalistic criticism to success of a play is crucial. In fact the playwright is very vulnerable to dramatic criticism. It definitely can impact the success of a play, whereas the same is not true of a film, which has a wide opening and as often as not doesn't really depend on critical success in order to have commercial success.>>[168]

Natürlich genießen in den amerikanischen Metropolen nicht alle Zeitungen den gleichen Stellenwert. Da auch viele Printmedien in den letzten Jahren bankrott gegangen sind, kommt es zu Monopolstellungen der übrig gebliebenen Publikationen. In New York, sowie den gesamten Vereinigten Staaten, hat die *New York Times* eine besondere Machtposition, wie auch der New Yorker Theaterregisseur Terence Lamude bestätigt:

<< The power of "a" critic "The *New York Times*". (…) there is nothing like the *New York Times* and it can kill, close a play before even a magazine review can come out. So, its power for plays is unquestionable, its power for musicals - "Wicked", for example, did not get a great review from the *New York Times* and yet it is still on. Because lots of little girls want to see it.>>[169]

II.9. Der Film – das Endprodukt?

Als der Film entstanden ist, war die Angst da, dass die Leinwand die Bühne eines Tages ersetzen könnte und auch bei Adaptionen gab es

[167] vgl. Interview mit Chris Boneau: Anhang, p.138 ff.
[168] Herrington, Joan: 2002, p.121.
[169] Interview mit Terence Lamude: Anhang, p.153.

früher die Befürchtung, dass der Bühnentext nach einer Verfilmung an Interesse verlieren würde.

Doch letzteres hat sich in den vergangenen Jahren in die Gegenrichtung entwickelt. Die Bekanntheit einer filmischen Adaption steigert das Interesse und die Zuschauerzahlen von gleichnamigen Theaterproduktionen. Linda Winer hat diese Veränderung miterleben können:

> <<This is so interesting –it used to be true that once a movie was made of a play, the play would die because people would say "I saw the movie for $10, why would I go and spend a $100 and see the play". What changed that was "Chicago" the musical, that completely bumped that trend up. That the producers of "Chicago" played it so beautifully that they went on the curtails of the movie and what happens is in recent decades people seem to want familiar things. It's that branding thing that has become so important and so instead of seeing the movie and then coming to New York and thinking "oh I don't want to see this, I already saw the movie", it made it that much more famous "Oh I know this, I saw the movie, I want to see the movie on the stage". (…) if it has been a movie it is already a star. The movie is a movie star. So the play is a movie star.>>[170]

Somit ist der Film nicht nur ein finanzieller Gewinn für den Autor, sondern er wird sogar zu einer sehr fruchtbaren Werbemaschine, die dem Bühnenstück selbst Chancen auf eine Wiederbelebung erteilt. Terence Lamude bestätigte, dass das Theaterstück keinesfalls obsolet würde nach einer Verfilmung, sondern <<On the contrary it keeps it in the public's mind.>>[171] Es entsteht ein geschlossener Kreis, in dem zuerst das Theaterstück, mit dem Pulitzer-Preis gekrönt, eine Verfilmung erleichtert und die Verfilmung dann das Leben des dramatischen Textes verlängert. Es scheint zwischen Theater und Film eine ständige, belebende Wechselbeziehung zu herrschen. Die Filmindustrie hilft mit finanziellen Mitteln und das Theater scheint die Kriterien der künstlerischen Integrität zu füllen.

[170] Interview mit Linda Winer: Anhang, p.193.
[171] Interview mit Terence Lamude: Anhang, p.166.

II.10. Problematiken von Adaptionen

Theaterstücke erzählen Geschichten in Form von Dialogen – Filme zeigen Geschichten in Form von Bildern und verwenden Worte erst in zweiter Instanz.

Genau dieser Gesichtspunkt macht eine Verfilmung eines dialogreichen Stücks schwierig. Als Zuschauer sind wir einen Bilderreichtum im Kino gewohnt. Innerhalb von wenigen Minuten ändern sich Perspektiven, Schauspieler, Zeit und Raum. Am Theater ist eine solch schnelle Veränderung schwer möglich. Oft findet ein ganzer Akt oder sogar ein ganzes Stück in dem gleichen Raum statt. Diese statische Blickweise muss eine Adaption aufzubrechen wissen, damit die Handlung cinematographisch funktioniert.

Dies geschieht meist, indem zwischen einzelnen Szenen hin und her geschnitten wird. Oft werden Szenen, die zuvor an einem Ort gespielt haben, so geteilt, dass sie mehrere kleine Bilder an verschiedenen Orten ergeben. Doch gerade diese Öffnung des Raumes entstellt die Handlung oft. So werden Theaterstücke stets für einen klar abgegrenzten Raum, die Bühne, geschrieben. Es entsteht eine Enge, welche der Zuschauer sehen und spüren kann.

Doubt von John Patrick Shanley ist eine oft gelobte Verfilmung des gleichnamigen Pulitzer-Preis-Siegers in der Kategorie Drama. Doch die Kritik an der Adaption ist meist die gleiche, wie auch Chris Boneau, der die PR Tätigkeiten für das Theaterstück und den Film übernahm, in dem Interview meinte:

> << (...) my only criticism about the movie of “Doubt” was - I know they have to in a movie, take it outside of the four walls of the room but there was something about those confrontation scenes happening inside that crapped principals office - we’ve all been there as a student, a teacher, or a parent - I was a teacher, so I know what it was like to be in that small office when you are meeting with the students or a parent and there is something incredibly claustrophobic strictly about catholic school, that, I wish they hadn’t taken that walk, of course you would not have gotten Violin, that snotty crying nose and all that, the reality is that there is something completely claustrophobic about being in that room that was captured beautifully on stage, that I don’t think you got walking the sidewalk.>>[172]

[172] Interview mit Chris Boneau: Anhang, p.131.

Weiteres werden Dialoge gestrichen beziehungsweise umgeschrieben, da gewisse sprachliche Facetten des Theaters, im Film nicht funktionieren, wie auch Theaterkritikerin Linda Winer beschreibt:

> << (...) the poetry and the language does not usually translate, usually things that are fantastic in terms of language on the stage can sound horribly mannered and self conscious and ridiculous in the movies.>>[173]

Grund dafür ist sicherlich der Anspruch der Realitätsnähe, welche Film mit Alltagssprache erreichen möchte.

Der Spagat zwischen der Treue zum Ausgangsmaterial und der Treue zum Medium Film scheint ein schwieriger zu sein. Gleichzeitig wird besonders treuen Verfilmungen oft vorgeworfen, schlicht gefilmtes Theater zu sein.

Im abschließenden Teil dieser Diplomarbeit steht das Pulitzer-Preis gewinnende Theaterstück *Proof*, seine filmische Adaption im Mittelpunkt, sowie der Autor David Auburn im Mittelpunkt.

[173] Interview mit Linda Winer: Anhang, p.194 f.

III. *Proof* von David Auburn

Nach der Lektüre von etwa fünfzig Pulitzer Preis gewinnenden Stücken, der Sichtung zahlreicher Verfilmungen wurde mir klar, dass ich mich in meiner abschließenden Analyse auf ein Stück als Fallbeispiel beschränken muss.

Hierbei lag mir daran, ein Theaterstück zu wählen, welches viele der Pulitzer-Preis typischen Charakteristika hat. *Proof* von David Auburn entspricht diesem Anspruch und war auch das am Broadway meist gespielte Stück des letzten Jahrzehnts. Auf den folgenden Seiten stelle ich den Autor vor und gebe einen kleinen Einblick in sein Werk, um Aspekte seines Schreibstils anzusprechen. Schließlich kommt es zu der Analyse des Theaterstücks und seiner Verfilmung. Aufgrund der Argumentation in dem Kapitel über Adaptationen, seien hier die Endprodukte Theaterstück und Film miteinander verglichen und nicht Drehbuch und dramatischer Text oder Film und Theateraufführung.

III.1. David Auburn

David Auburn wurde 1969 in Chicago im amerikanischen Bundesstaat Illinois geboren und ist in Arkansas aufgewachsen. Geprägt von seinem Vater, einem Universitätsprofessor der Anglistik mit Schwerpunkt auf den Arbeiten des britischen Dramatikers Richard Brinsley Sheridan aus dem 18. Jahrhundert, hatte er schon ein frühes Interesse für Theater und Literatur entwickelt.

Er besuchte die University of Chicago, wo er als Hauptfach politische Philosophie studierte. Während seiner Studienzeit wurde er Teil der Theatertruppe Off Off Campus, für die er schließlich begann, Sketche zu schreiben, in denen er anfangs auch selbst mitwirkte.

Nach seinem Studienabschluss 1991 erhielt er ein Stipendium von Steven Spielbergs Produktionsfirma *Amblin Entertainment,* um in Los Angeles für ein Jahr das Handwerk des Drehbuchschreibens zu erlernen. In dem von mir geführten Interview fasste er diese Erfahrung wie folgt zusammen:

<<The screen writing fellowship was kind of a fluke for me because I was trying to write plays and after college what I thought what I would do be to stay in Chicago, where I knew a lot of people who have started sort

of store front small theater companies and have had a certain degree of success with that and that seemed like a model that was very doable but I'd also just applied to this thing 'cause I had heard about it and almost as fluke, I think, I got in. So I did it. And I spent, about; I spent a year writing this screenplay out there. At the end of that year I was going broke and the screenplay had not sold and I thought, I think I'd rather, if I am going to be like starved, I'd rather do it trying to be a playwright in New York than trying to be a screenwriter in LA.>>[174]

Mit dieser Erkenntnis zog David Auburn nach New York City. Dort nahm er zahlreiche Nebenjobs an und wurde schließlich in das einjährige Dramatikerprogramm der renommierten Julliard School aufgenommen. Im Rahmen dieses Studiums, schrieb er sein erstes abendfüllendes Theaterstück *Skyscraper*, welches 1997 im Greenwich House Theater in New York seine Premiere feierte.

Danach folgte er seiner heutigen Ehefrau für eine Weile nach London und schrieb dort den ersten Entwurf für *Proof*, welches sein bekanntestes Werk werden sollte und für welches er 2001 schließlich den Pulitzer-Preis für Drama erhalten hat.

Seit dem Erfolg von *Proof* wurden zwei von Auburn adaptierte Drehbücher (darunter *Proof)* verfilmt und mehrere seiner Einakter inszeniert und veröffentlicht. Die Tagebücher von Mihail Sebastian[175] hat David Auburn zu einem Einpersonenstück mit dem Titel *The Journals of Mihail Sebastian* adaptiert, welches 2004 im Theater der Keen Company in New York zu sehen war. 2007 hat er das erste Mal selbst Regie bei einem Kinofilm geführt, für welchen er auch das Drehbuch geschrieben hat: *The Girl in the Park*. Der Entstehungsprozess von *The Girl in the Park* war für ihn <<the most interesting, most exhilarating thing I've ever done.>>[176]

---

[174] Interview with David Auburn: Anhang, p.85.

[175] <<Mihail Sebastian, born under the name Joseph Hechter in 1907, was a well-regarded, ambitious young journalist and writer in Romania. (..). But Mihail Sebastian was a Jew. For 10 years, starting two years after Hitler came to power, he meticulously recorded the events around him, his thoughts and emotions, describing the gradual rise in anti-Semitism and the erosion of his personal relationships, human rights and dignity. Mihail Sebastian survived the war, but tragically was killed in a car accident in 1945. His diary "Journal, 1935-1944: The Fascist Years" was published only in 1998, after it was smuggled to Israel by his brother, and in 2000, its 672-page English translation was printed.>> Rokem, Freddie: Stand: 1.Februar 2010

[176] Interview mit David Auburn: Anhang, p.97.

Im Moment arbeitet David Auburn sowohl an einem neuen Theaterstück, als auch an einigen möglichen Filmprojekten. Er ist mit der Historikerin Frances Rosenfeld verheiratet, hat zwei Töchter und lebt auf der Upper West Side in New York City.[177]

III.2. Stil

Im Laufe der Schaffensperioden eines Autors gibt es natürlich immer wieder zahlreiche Texte, welche nie das Tageslicht erblicken, somit beziehe ich mich in diesem Überblick nur auf die publizierten Texte und inkludiere noch ein weiteres Kurzstück, *Un Upset*, welches mir der Autor selbst zukommen hat lassen.

Von David Auburn sind im Verlag Dramatists Play Service, Inc., zehn dramatische Texte erschienen, darunter drei abendfüllende Stücke[178] und sieben Kurzstücke, wobei diese in einem Sammelband erschienen sind.

Eine Sichtung seiner veröffentlichen Werke zeigt das Wachstums eines Autors, der durch kluge Texte und Wortwitz einzigartige Figuren entstehen lässt.

Ein Markenzeichen von David Auburn ist es, den Figuren meist sehr spezifische berufliche Merkmale zu verleihen. Er schafft die Welt um seine Figuren mit einer Genauigkeit, die dem Zuschauer geradezu einen Voyeurblick in einen anderen Mikrokosmos tun lässt. In dem er „Insiderinformationen“ scheinbar nebenbei erwähnt, fühlt sich das Publikum selbst als Teil dieser Welt.

Beispielsweise arbeiten die Hauptfiguren in *Fifth Planet, Mike* und *Veronica,* in verschiedenen Berufen in einer Sternenwarte und begegnen sich über Monate hinweg in der Nacht auf einer Anhöhe. Die beiden nähern sich so über ihre Liebe zur Astronomie einander an und David Auburn lässt seine Figuren durch Fachwissen glänzen:

> <<It is the only planet other than the Earth known to have a magnetic field. The violent, surging atmosphere, of which the famous “Red Spot“ – big enough to hold 100 earths – is the most prominent feature, is composed primarily of methane, ammonia, and hydrogen.>>[179]

---

[177] vgl. Interview mit David Auburn: Anhang p.84 ff.
[178] *Skyscraper* 1998, *Proof* 2002 und *The Journals of Mihail Sebastian* 2004
[179] Auburn, David: 2002, p.13.

In *An Upset* zeigt David Auburn zwei professionelle Tennisspieler, die sich über Jahre hinweg immer nach dem Spiel im Umkleideraum treffen. Neben dem Generationskonflikt und einer Art Vater-Sohn Beziehung, die thematisiert wird, behandelt Auburn den Zuschauer wieder wie einen „Insider“:

<<They call a foot fault RANDOMLY once tournament just to show they remember the fucking rules (...).>>[180]

Dieser Aspekt findet sich auch in seinem ersten Langstück *Skyscraper* wieder, in dem er Architektur zur Kulisse, sowohl inhaltlich wie auch physisch, in Form eines Hochhausdaches, macht. Seine Vollendung findet dieses Stilmittel schließlich in *Proof*, in dem er geschafft hat, die Welt der Mathematiker mit punktgenauen Fakten so gut zu beschreiben, dass er oft nach seinem mathematischen Wissen gefragt worden ist.
Einerseits könnte man Auburn unterstellen, durch dieses Manöver von einer schwachen Geschichte ablenken zu wollen, jedoch liegt sein Talent auch darin, Gefühle in Dialogen auf einem klaren Punkt zu bringen.
In *Skyscrapper* spricht eine der Hauptfiguren, *Vivien*, einen Monolog kurz vor ihrem Selbstmord. Mit einem ihrer letzten Sätze beschreibt der Autor ihre Indifferenz der Zukunft gegenüber mit folgenden Worten:

<<I know what I am doing. I don’t care what anybody thinks. I care nothing for the future. I have as much difficulty imagining tomorrow morning as you have remembering my name.>>[181]

In vielen Dialogsmomenten seiner Theaterstücke schafft es Auburn, beeindruckende Ideen zu präsentieren, welche auch als eigenständige Zitate stehen könnten:

<<I believe in the future love will not be left to amateurs. The sport will be professionalized.>>[182]

[180] Auburn, David: 2008, p.5.
[181] Auburn, David: 1998, p.27.
[182] Auburn, David: 2002, p.80.

Auch gewisse narrative Themen lassen sich in Auburns Werk immer wieder finden. Besonders dominant scheint der Generationenkonflikt bzw. die Beziehung eines Elternteils zu der Tochter/dem Sohn zu sein.
In seinem Debüt als Filmdirektor und gleichzeitig als Autor des Drehbuchs, *The Girl in the Park*[183], erzählt Auburn die Geschichte einer Mutter, deren kleine Tochter spurlos verschwindet. Sechzehn Jahre später trifft *Julia* (gespielt von Sigourney Weaver) auf eine junge Frau, in die sie ihre Tochter hineinprojiziert.
In *An Upset* treffen ein älterer und ein jünger professioneller Tennisspieler aufeinander und in *Skycrapper* wird im Erzählstrang von *Louis* und *Vivien* der Generationskonflikt aufgenommen. *Vivien* wird als besonders schön und jung beschrieben und *Louis* im Kontrast dazu als sehr alt.
Im Gegensatz dazu fokussiert sich Auburn kaum auf das Thema der romantischen Liebe. Am ehesten kommt diese Thematik in dem Kurzstück *We Had A Very Good Time* zur Sprache, welches sich um die Probleme eines Paares im Urlaub dreht. In diesem Stück greift Auburn jedoch ein weiteres Sujet auf, welches sich in seiner Arbeit immer wieder findet – die moderne „amerikanische Identität“:

<<Yes, we should have fun. We'll go to a movie. And then we find a bar, not a *brewery* in a *barn* run by *nuns*, one of the good hotel bars and we'll sit by the window and I will buy you a drink. And then if it's still raining we will go back to the hotel - [...] And keep the windows open so we can hear the rain, and get in bed....(*He kisses her.*) I know we can „do this at home, „ but.... (*long kiss.*)>>[184]

In diesem Zusammenhang macht der Autor auch immer sehr spezifische Referenzen zu amerikanischen Produkten und der amerikanischen Populärkultur. In diesem Sinne verwendet er die Nationalität, ähnlich den spezifischen Informationen über die Berufssparten seiner Figuren, dazu, wie erwähnt, den Zuschauer wie einen Teil dieser Welt zu behandeln, wie auch in einem der Monologe aus *Three Monologues*:

[183] USA, 2007.
[184] Auburn, David: 2002, p.91.

<<I don't want to, but I turn on the TV. Absolutely nothing on. Three kinds of news. Game shows. Re-runs, big sitcom living rooms. Baseball. Teen lifeguards. Cooking in Spanish. *I watch for four and half hours.*>>[185]

All diese stilistischen Merkmale von David Auburns Werk treffen sich in seinem bekanntesten Theaterstück und trugen zu dem Erfolg von *Proof* bei.

III.3. Proof

III.3.1. Form

Das erste, was jeder Mensch an einem dramatischen Werk wahrnimmt ist der Titel. *Proof* (zu Deutsch „Der Beweis") gibt gleich einen Rückschluss auf die Art des Dramas, wie auch Manfred Pfister in seinem Werk *Das Drama* argumentiert:

<<So bietet der Titel eines Dramas, gemäß der rhetorischen Konvention, daß ein Titel auf ein zentrales Moment des folgenden Textes verweist, wichtige Vorinformationen, die die Rezeption bestimmen – (...)>>[186]

Ein Beweis ist nur dann notwendig, wenn auch etwas in Frage gestellt wird, wenn es ein Rätsel, eine Ungewissheit gibt. Da der Titel eine werbende Funktion hat, kann man bei *Proof* annehmen, dass es sich um ein Theaterstück handelt, in dem es ein Geheimnis zu entschlüsseln gibt.
Proof besteht aus zwei Akten mit je vier und fünf Szenen. Die Handlung spielt auf der Veranda der Rückseite eines Einfamilienhauses in Chicago. Es ist ein Ensemblestück mit vier, an der Spielzeit gemessenen, gleichwertigen Figuren.

III.3.2. Analyse

Auch moderne Werke zum Thema Dramenanalyse kommen nicht umhin, Aristoteles und seine *Poetik* zu erwähnen, in der er sechs notwendige Elemente nennt. Diese Bestandteile beziehen sich zwar auf die Tragödie seiner Zeit, doch lassen sie sich auch auf das moderne Drama anwenden, wenn man das letzte Element als Möglichkeit und nicht als Pflicht sieht.

[185] Auburn, David: 2002, p.65.
[186] Pfister, Manfred: 1997, p.69.

Diese sind wie folgt: *mythos* (Handlung), *ethe* (Charaktere), *lexis* (Sprache), *diánoia* (Erkenntnisfähigkeit, Absicht), *opsis* (Schau, Szenerie) und *melopiía* (Gesang, Musik).[187]
In einem zeitgenössischen Werk zur Dramenanalyse *The Architecture of Drama* von David Letwin, Joe Stockdale und Robin Stockdale werden fünf Komponenten erwähnt, die natürlich ihre Wurzeln in den aristotelischen Elementen haben, jedoch die Gegenwart ansprechen. Die Bestandteile sind: *plot* (Handlung), character (Figuren), *theme* (Thematik), *genre* (Gattung, Genre) und *style* (Stil des Autors bzw. der Inszenierung).[188]
Mithilfe der zuvor genannten Elemente möchte ich mich nun mit *Proof*, David Auburns bekanntestem Stück, für welches er 2001 den Pulitzer-Preis erhielt, auseinander setzen.

III.3.2.1 Plot

Nach Aristoteles ist das wichtigste Element eines Bühnenwerks, die Handlung.

> *<<Denn die Tragödie ist nicht Nachahmung von Menschen, sondern von Handlung und von Lebenswirklichkeit.>>*[189]

Diese Handlung in *Proof* ist kurz zusammengefasst:
Die 25-jährige *Catherine* hat ihren mathematisch brillanten, jedoch mental unstabilen Vater, *Robert*, jahrelang gepflegt und abgeschieden von der Welt an ihrer eigenen mathematischen Kreativität gearbeitet. Nach seinem Tod muss sich *Catherine* mit der Ankunft ihrer Schwester *Claire* und einem ehemaligen Schüler ihres Vaters, namens *Hal,* auseinandersetzen. In mitten einer aufkeimenden Romanze und den Entscheidungen, die nun getroffen werden müssen, taucht ein Notizbuch auf – dessen Inhalt die mathematische Welt revolutionieren könnte. Die Identität des Autors ist aber unklar.

The Architecture of Drama zählt sieben strukturelle Teile der Handlung auf, welche einen facettenreicheren Blick auf den Plot erlauben:

---

[187] vgl. Asmuth, Bernhard: 2004, p.3.
[188] Letwin, David u.a.: 2008, p. xvi.
[189] Aristoteles; 1992, p.21.

- *Leading Character* – der Protagonist, um den sich die Geschichte dreht.
- *The Inciting Incident* – der erregende Moment, der den Anstoß zur Geschichte gibt und den Protagonist aus seinen geordneten Bahnen wirft.
- *Objective* – das Ziel nach dem der Protagonist strebt, damit sein Leben wieder in Balance ist.
- *Obstacle* – die Hindernisse am Weg dieses Ziels zu erkennen.
- *The Crisis* - die schwierigste Entscheidung, die der Protagonist trifft, um die Hindernisse zu überwinden.
- *The Climax* – der Höhepunkt der Geschichte, in dem der Protagonist gewinnt oder verliert.
- *The Resolution* – die wiederhergestellte Balance nach dem Höhepunkt.[190]

Proof ist ein 4-Personenstück in zwei Akten mit einer klaren Protagonistin: *Catherine* ist die zentrale Figur, um die sich die Handlung dreht, ihre Existenz ist unabdingbar für den Handlungsverlauf. Es ist ihr Leben, durch welches der Zuschauer Zugang zu den Geschehnissen bekommt und es sind ihre Taten die den Kurs des Dramas formen.
Der erregende Moment der Geschichte ist der Tod des Vaters, *Robert*. Dieses Ereignis ist Auslöser dafür, dass wir jetzt in das Leben von *Catherine* hineingezogen werden. In *Proof* ist dies zwar schon geschehen, bevor der Vorhang das erste Mal hoch geht, doch da *Catherine* eine lebhafte Fantasie hat, sehen wir sie und ihren Vater auf der Bühne im Dialog am Abend ihres 25. Geburtstags und erfahren erst später, dass die Figur des Vaters in dieser Szene nur ihre Einbildung ist:

<<ROBERT: Well. Because I'm also dead. *(Beat.)* Aren't I?
CATHERINE: You died a week ago.
ROBERT: Heart failure. Quick. The funeral's tomorrow.>>

Von diesem Moment an weiß der Zuschauer, dass die eigentliche Geschichte angefangen hat.

[190] Letwin, David u.a.: 2008, p.1-2.

Catherines Ziel ist es, aus eigener Kraft, eigenständig ein schönes Leben als Mathematikerin zu führen. Dieses Ziel wird dadurch klar, dass *Catherine* bewusst Mathematik an einer anderen Universität studiert, als an der, an der ihr Vater Professor ist. Doch die Krankheit ihres Vaters hinderte sie zu seinen Lebzeiten, ihr Ziel zu erreichen, da seine ständige Pflege beinahe ihr ganzes Leben in Anspruch genommen hat. Sein Ableben räumt ihr jedoch nicht die teilweise ersehnte, wenn auch schmerzliche Freiheit ein, sondern bringt in Form ihrer Schwester und ihrer eigenen Zerbrechlichkeit wieder neue Hindernisse.

Claire ist ungewollt eines der großen Hindernisse auf *Catherines* Weg zum eigenständigen Glück. Nach dem Tod des gemeinsamen Vaters möchte *Claire* die Verantwortung für ihre kleine Schwester übernehmen, von der sie annimmt, zwar das mathematische Talent ihres Vaters geerbt zu haben, aber auch seine Schizophrenie. Aus diesem Grund will sie *Catherine* zu sich nach New York nehmen und das Familienhaus in Chicago verkaufen. Das größte Hindernis in *Catherines* Leben ist jedoch sie selbst. Ihre Angst, die Krankheit ihres Vaters zu erben und die Unfähigkeit, sich gegen ihre Schwester durchzusetzen, lähmen sie am Weg zu ihrem persönlichen Glück. Auch *Hal,* ihr romantischer Gegenspieler, wird zum Hindernis, weil er ihr nicht glaubt, Autorin der revolutionären Formel zu sein.

Der Moment der Entscheidung ist für *Catherine* der Moment, in dem sie *Hal* den Schlüssel zu der Schublade überreicht, in der sich die Formel befindet. *Hal* findet die Formel, deklariert sie als brillant und nimmt an, dass sie von *Robert* stammt. Nun kommt es am Ende des 1. Aktes zum Höhepunkt der Geschichte:

> <<CATHERINE: I didn't find it. I wrote it.>>[191]

Claire und *Hal* glauben ihr beide nicht, doch nachdem *Hal* die Formel untersuchen lässt, realisiert er, dass es sich bei *Catherine* um die Autorin handeln muss. Mit dieser Erkenntnis rettet er *Catherine* vermutlich davor nach New York zu gehen und sich in die Abhängigkeit ihrer Schwester zu begeben.

[191] Auburn, David: 2001, p.41.

Das Stück endet, während *Catherine* mit *Hal* die Formel durchgeht. Die eigentliche Erfüllung findet in der angenommen Zukunft statt, da wir aufgrund des revolutionären Inhalts der Formel darauf schließen können, dass *Catherine* eine erfolgreiche Mathematikerin wird und wahrscheinlich auch ihr persönliches Glück mit *Hal* finden wird.

III.3.2.2. Figuren

An zweiter Stelle, nach der Zusammenfügung der Geschehnisse, kommen für Aristoteles die Figuren. Er bezieht sich hierbei auf die menschliche Essenz der Figur, die in ihrem Handeln zutage tritt und weniger in ihrer Sprache und auch nicht auf physiognomischen Merkmalen beruht:

> <<Auch Glück und Unglück beruhen auf Handlung, und das Lebensziel ist eine Art Handlung, keine bestimmte Beschaffenheit. Die Menschen haben wegen ihres Charakters eine bestimmte Beschaffenheit, und infolge ihrer Handlungen sind sie glücklich oder nicht.>>[192]

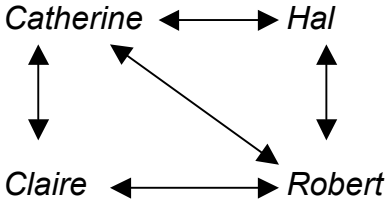
Diese Ansicht korrespondiert gut mit der zeitgenössischen Art der Figurenbeschreibung. Zu Zeiten des Dramatikers Eugene O'Neills, dem meist gekürten Pulitzerpreisträger, wurden Figuren meist seitenweise äußerlich genau beschrieben, von der Form der Augen bis hin zu der Farbe der Hosen. Auburn, wie viele seiner Zeitgenossen, verzichtet auf eine ausführliche Beschreibung seiner Figuren; bis auf Geschlecht, Alter und Kleidungsstil (nur bei *Claire* findet sich das Adjektiv „attractive") erfahren wir nichts über seine Figuren im Nebentext.

Neben dem Auftritt der Figur selbst, kann man auch auf die Charaktereigenschaften der Figur schließen, in dem man beobachtet, was die anderen Figuren über jene Figur sagen. Man kann mit gewisser Vorsicht auch die Selbstbeschreibung der Figur in die Analyse mit einbeziehen. Allerdings tendieren Bühnenfiguren, wahren Menschen ähnelnd, eher selten dazu, allzu selbstkritisch zu sein und sich selbst wahrheitsgetreu zu beschreiben. Man spricht hier auch von indirekter und direkter Charakteristik, die sowohl explizit, also ausdrücklich formuliert, oder implizit, aus dem Kontext abgeleitet stattfinden kann.

---

[192] Aristoteles; 1992, p.21.

Neben den Eigenschaften und dem Erscheinungsbild, gilt es bei einer Figurenanalyse auch noch die sozialen Umstände sowie die Konstellation der Figuren zueinander zu untersuchen, um so ein mehrdimensionales Bild der vom Dramatiker erdachten Personen zu gewinnen.
Die Figurenkonstellation sei hier mit einer Skizze dargestellt:



Daraus lässt sich sogleich erkennen, dass *Catherine* und *Robert* die maßgebenden Charaktere des Stücks sind, da sie mit allen Figuren in Kontakt sind, wobei *Claire* und *Hal* nur mit je zwei Charakteren eine engere Bindung haben.

Catherine

Über *Catherines* Vergangenheit, welche ihre soziale Situation bedingt, erfahren wir, dass ihre Mutter früh gestorben war. Die ältere Schwester *Claire* verließ das Elternhaus bald und ließ *Catherine* alleine mit dem Vater zurück. *Robert*, der Vater der beiden, ist ein bekannter, brillanter Mathematiker und Professor an der Universität, der mit den Jahren an Schizophrenie erkrankt. Durch diese Umstände entscheidet sich *Catherine,* ihr Studium der Mathematik vorerst zu unterbrechen und schließlich einzustellen, um sich ganz dem Vater zu widmen. *Catherine* kommt aus diesem etwas verarmten, akademischen Elternhaus, welches vor allem durch die Krankheit, aber auch die mathematische Brillanz des Vaters gekennzeichnet ist. *Catherine* teilt jedoch die Liebe und das Talent zur Mathematik mit ihrem Vater und arbeitet in den wenigen freien Stunden, an ihren eigenen mathematischen Studien.
Das Publikum sieht *Catherine* in der ersten Szene halb schlafend, alleine und unordentlich gekleidet, am Abend ihres 25.Geburtstags. *Catherines* Sprache enthält viel Selbstironie:

<<CATHERINE. Because in order for friends to take you out you generally have to have friends.
ROBERT. *(Dismissive.)* Oh –
CATHERINE. It's funny how that works.>>[193]

Catherine scheint unverblümt immer das zu sagen, was sie sich denkt, dies jedoch oft sehr hart und hält so Menschen meist auf Distanz. Gleichzeitig hat sie gelernt ihre eigenen Bedürfnisse zu unterdrücken. *Catherines* Ähnlichkeit zu ihrem Vater wird im Stück immer wieder angesprochen und drückt sich durch ihre eigenen Ängste, sowie die Aussagen anderer aus:

<<CLAIRE. I think you have some of his talent and some of his tendency toward....instability.>>[194]

Eine treibende Kraft der Figur *Catherine* ist sicherlich die Liebe und Loyalität zu ihrem Vater, die nicht zuletzt von einer gewissen Bewunderung geprägt ist. Gleichzeitig übernimmt sie auch die Rolle der Pflegerin, was die Vater-Tochter-Beziehung natürlich belastet:

<<CATHERINE. I LIVED WITH HIM.
I spent my life with him. I fed him. Talked to him. Tried to listen when he talked. Talked to people who weren't there... Watched him shuffling around like a ghost. A very smelly ghost. He was filthy. I had to make sure he bathed. My own father.>>[195]

Die Entwicklung der Figur *Catherines* ist vor allem eine des Erwachsenwerdens. Der Hauptkonflikt von *Catherine* ist die Abtrennung von dem dominanten Vater, dies auch nach seinem Tod, und die Bildung einer eigenständigen Existenz.

Robert

Roberts prominenteste Eigenschaft ist seine mathematische Genialität:

<<HAL. I am twenty-eight, all right? When your dad was younger than both of us he made major contributions to three fields: game theory, algebraic geometry, and nonlinear operator theory. Most of us never get

[193] Auburn, David: 2001, p.7.
[194] Auburn, David: 2001, p.39.
[195] Auburn, David: 2001, p.16.

our heads around one. He basically invented the mathematical techniques for studying rational behavior, and he gave the astrophysicists plenty to work over too.>>[196]

Diese große Begabung zieht Menschen zu ihm und fungiert auch als Entschuldigung für seine Krankheit. Seine Schizophrenie bekommt somit ein romantisches Flair. Die Hoffnung, dass seine „Machinery", wie er selbst zu seinem Verstand sagt, wieder funktioniert, hält auch seine junge Tochter an seiner Seite. Letzteres zeigt auch seinen ausgeprägten Egoismus, denn in dem Moment, in dem sich *Catherine* entschließt ihr Studium vorzusetzen kommt von ihm keine väterliche Unterstützung. Im Gegenteil, er versucht in ihr Zweifel zu wecken:

<<ROBERT. It's a huge place. They're serious up there. I mean serious. Yeah the football's a disaster but the math guys don't kid around. You haven't been in school. You sure you're ready? You can get buried up there.>>[197]

Von seiner eigenen Kindheit und seinem frühen sozialen Umfeld erfahren wir wenig. Überraschend ist, dass die Familie trotz seiner anscheinend erfolgreichen Universitätskarriere kaum Geld hat, was auf eine gewisse Sorglosigkeit schließen lässt, auch wenn für die finanziellen Mängel kein klarer Grund geliefert wird.
Der Tod seiner Frau ist sicherlich Mitgrund für die intensive Bindung zu *Catherine*, die so weit geht, dass die Beziehung zu seiner zweiten Tochter *Claire* kaum existent erscheint.
Robert klammert sich bis an sein Lebensende an seine Tochter *Catherine* und an den einstigen Ruhm und ist jedoch gleichzeitig geradezu verloren in seiner Schizophrenie.

Claire

<<Claire, stylish, attractive, drinks coffee from a mug.>>[198] , ist Auburns Beschreibung und positioniert sie somit als Gegenteil zu ihrer Schwester

[196] Auburn, David: 2001, p.15.
[197] Auburn, David: 2001, p.44.
[198] Auburn, David: 2001, p.21.

Catherine, die als <<*exhausted, haphazardly dressed*>>[199] beschrieben wird. *Claire* und *Catherine* teilen sich zwar das gleiche Elternhaus, haben sich jedoch in vollkommen verschiedene Richtungen entwickelt. Während *Catherine* zuhause bei ihrem Vater geblieben ist, ist *Claire* an die Universität gegangen und hat gearbeitet. Diese Diskrepanz zwischen beiden und die unterschiedliche Sichtweise auf die Situation des Vaters fungiert als ständiges Konfliktmaterial:

<<CATHERINE. Where were you five years ago? You weren't helping then.
CLAIRE. I was working.
CATHERINE. I was HERE. I lived with him ALONE.
CLAIRE. I was working fourteen-hour days. I paid every bill here. I paid off the mortgage on this three-bedroom house while I was living in a studio in Brooklyn.
CATHERINE. You had your life. You got to finish school.
CLAIRE. You could have stayed in school!
CATHERINE. How?
CLAIRE. I would have done anything – I told you that. I told you a million times to do anything you wanted.
CATHERINE. What about Dad? Someone had to take care of him.
CLAIRE. He was ill. He should have been in a full-time professional care situation.
CATHERINE. He didn't belong in the nuthouse.>>[200]

Claire ist in gewissem Sinne der Außenseiter der Familie, denn sie ist weder so krank, noch mathematisch so brillant, wie es *Robert* und *Catherine* sind.

Claire hat sich ihr eigenes Leben in New York geschaffen und kämpft in diesem Zusammenhang mit ständigen Schuldgefühlen. Deshalb versucht sie, nach dem Tod des Vaters, ihre Schwester nach New York mitzunehmen und möglicherweise dadurch wieder etwas gutzumachen. Gleichzeitig wirkt sie manchmal wie der Störfaktor der Handlung, der *Catherine* von ihrem Lebensziel, der Unabhängigkeit, abhalten will und in den entscheidenden Momenten nicht an sie glaubt.

Die scheinbare Simplizität und kühle Oberflächlichkeit der Figur *Claire* kann irreführend wirken, wie David Auburn selbst feststellt:

---

[199] Auburn, David: 2001, p.5.
[200] Auburn, David: 2001, p.38.

<< I do think when I've seen productions of the play gone bad, it almost always is because Claire is wrong, because Claire is played as too harsh or a kind of comic villain and when I have seen productions of the play gone right I see Claire is entirely sympathetic, well meaning person, who is never the less just exasperated and forwarded by this sister of her. And Claire is annoying to Catherine and she may be annoying to us at times but she means well and there is a range of, there is room within the world to make her a slightly more or slightly less annoying but if she becomes a villain then the production sucks essentially.>>[201]

Hal

Hal ist die romantische Figur des Stücks und als perfektes Gegenstück zu *Catherine* konzipiert. Über seinen familiären Hintergrund erfahren wir wenig. Seine Mutter ist vor einigen Jahren verstorben und darauf hin hat er professionelle Hilfe während des Trauerprozesses in Anspruch genommen.

Obwohl er selbst auch ein mittelmäßig erfolgreicher Mathematiker ist, ist er kein klassischer „Nerd" und beschreibt sich selbst indirekt wie folgt:

<<HAL. Oh they're raging geeks. But they're geeks who, you know can dress themselves...hold down a job at a major university...Some of them have switched from glasses to contacts. They play sports, they play in a band, they get laid surprisingly often, so in that sense they sort of make you question the whole set of terms – geek, nerd, wonk, dweeb, Dilbert, paste eater.>>[202]

Hal liebt und verehrt *Robert* und diese Bewunderung trägt womöglich auch zu seiner Verliebtheit zu *Catherine* bei. *Hal* ahnt auch zu Anfangs nichts von *Catherines* eigenem überragendem Talent für Mathematik, sondern fühlte sich schon immer hingezogen zu ihr:

<<HAL. I always liked you.
CATHERINE. You did?
HAL. Even before I knew you. I'd catch glimpses of you when you visited your dad's office at school. I wanted to talk to you but I thought, No, you do not flirt with your doctoral adviser's daughter.>>[203]

Hal ist die erste Person, der sich *Catherine* öffnet und dem sie ihre Arbeit anvertraut. Diesem Vertrauen begegnet er zunächst zwar mit Misstrauen,

[201] Interview mit David Auburn: Anhang, p.100.
[202] Auburn, David: 2001, p.14.
[203] Auburn, David: 2001, p.33-34.

sieht jedoch seinen Fehler später ein. *Hal* symbolisiert in gewisser den Weg in das Leben, welches sich *Catherine* für sich selbst wünscht.

III.3.2.3. Thematik

In einem Artikel, von David Auburn verfasst, der 2004 in der *Los Angeles Times* erschienen ist, beschreibt er als zentrale Thematik von *Proof* die Angst des Erbes. *Catherines* innerer Konflikt dreht sich vor allem um die Frage, wie viel sie von ihrem Vater mitbekommen hat – wie viel von seiner Genialität und wie viel von seinem Wahnsinn. Auch für *Claire* stellt sich die Frage des Erbes in Bezug auf ihre eigene Existenz und die ihrer Schwester:

> <<CLAIRE. I'm a currency analyst. It helps to be very quick with numbers. I am. I probably inherited about one-one-thousandth of my father's ability. It's enough.
> Catherine got more, I am not sure how much.>>[204]

Davon wäre leicht abzuleiten, dass die von Auburn beabsichtigte Thematik des Stücks Genialität und Wahnsinn ist, doch ist dies nur oberflächlich so. Das Theaterstück handelt viel mehr um Familie und Verantwortung dieser gegenüber. *Catherine* und *Claire* sind in ihren Handlungen ständig von Schuldgefühlen und Verantwortungsgefühlen geprägt. *Catherine* hat aus Liebe und Loyalität ihr eigenes Leben zurückgestellt, um das Leben ihres Vaters zu erleichtern. *Claire* hat die finanzielle Last getragen, im Austausch gegen Unabhängigkeit. Beide kämpfen nach dem Tod des Vaters mit Dingen, die sie bereuen. *Catherine* damit, nicht ihr eigenes Leben gelebt zu haben und mit der schmerzhaften Erleichterung dies nun tun zu können. *Claire* versucht sich ihrer Schuldgefühle, dem nun verstorbenen Vater und *Catherine* gegenüber, dadurch zu entledigen, dass sie sich ihrer Schwester annehmen möchte, um so schließlich doch noch die Rolle einer Pflegerin zu übernehmen.

[204] Auburn, David: 2001, p.58.

III.3.2.4. Genre

Aristoteles hat das Drama in zwei fundamentale Gattungen unterteilt: Tragödie und Komödie. Heute wird der Begriff Gattung und Genre weitergespannt. Im Laufe der letzten Jahrzehnte sind immer neuere Genres hinzugekommen vom Melodrama bis zur romantischen Komödie. Diese Betitelungen helfen vor allem bei der Vermarktung des Werkes und zielen auf die gewünschte Reaktion des Publikums ab.[205]

In *The Architecture of Drama* werden fünf Basisgattungen beschrieben, <<tragedy, drama, melodrama, comedy, and farce>>[206].

Dieser Einteilung nach ist *Proof* ein Drama, ähnlich wie der französische Autor Denis Diderot das „drame bourgeois“ beschrieben hat.

> <<Drama would reflect, rather realistically, the milieu of the bourgeoisie: their vicissitudes, conflicts, and values. Characters of various occupations were to be shown, and such occupations were to provide psychological motivation for the action. Family relationships were to be represented, revealing the importance of family ties.>>[207]

Proof ist ein Theaterstück welches es von den Problemen und Konflikten einer Familie des Bürgertums handelt und diese auf eine realistische, zeitgenössische Art und Weise darstellt.

Es lassen sich in *Proof* auch komische Dialogteile finden, aber es ist immer ein mit Ironie gefärbter Witz, der nicht im Widerspruch zum Drama, daher die realistische Darstellung einer bürgerlichen Familie mit ihren Problemen, steht.

III.3.2.5. Stil

Proof ist ein modernes, dem Realismus verschriebenes Theaterstück. Bis auf Szene 1 und 4 des zweiten Aktes, verläuft die Geschichte linear. Die Szenen 1 und 4 in Akt 2 sind Rückblenden, um wichtige Momente der Geschichte zu zeigen und nicht nur von ihnen zu berichten. Der einzige Aspekt, der auf eine nicht realistisch angedachte Darstellung hindeutet, ist die erste Szene in Akt 1 in der *Catherine* mit ihrem Vater spricht und

---

[205] Vgl. Letwin, David u.a.: 2008, p.94.
[206] Letwin, David u.a.: 2008, p.94.
[207] Letwin, David u.a.: 2008, p.105.

jedoch erst einige Minuten später klar wird, dass dieser schon tot ist und wir *Catherines* Traum sehen.
Die Dialoge sind umgangssprachlich, zeitgemäß geschrieben. Das Bühnenbild bleibt unveränderlich die naturgetreue Veranda eines Einfamilienhauses.
David Auburn vereint in *Proof* alle seine erfolgreichen Stilmittel. Mit den Figuren *Robert, Catherine* und *Hal* gewährt er Einblick in das Leben von Akademikern, und Mathematikern. Das Stück ist gespickt mit interessanten mathematischen Fakten, die dem Rezipienten das Gefühl geben, etwas nebenbei zu lernen:

<<HAL. I'm stupid. Sophie Germain, of course.
CATHERINE. You know her?
HAL. Germain Primes.
CATHERINE. Right.
HAL. They're famous. Double them and add one, and you get another prime. Like two. Two is prime, doubled plus one is five: also prime.
CATHERINE. Right. Or 92, 305 times $2^{16,998}$ plus one.
HAL. *(Startled.)* Right.>>[208]

Dieses Stilmittel schafft es auch, die eigentliche Geschichte komplexer und intelligenter wirken zu lassen. Auburn verwendet Fakten um Fiktion interessanter scheinen zu lassen. Weiteres sind es die immer wiederkehrenden Insiderkommentare, die den Voyeurblick gewähren:

<<CATHERINE. Isn't that why people hold conferences? Travel. Room service. Tax-deductible sex in big hotel beds.>>[209]

David Auburn lässt alle Figuren ihre Gefühle aussprechen und somit keine Fragen ihrer Motivationen offen:

<<HAL. I want to spend the day with if possible. I'd like to spend as much time with you as I can unless of course I'm coming on way too strong right now and scaring you in which case I'll begin backpedaling immediately...*(She laughs. Her relief is evident; so is his. They kiss.)*>>[210]

Diese Ehrlichkeit der Figuren erleichtert die Identifikation mit der Handlung und die Empathie mit den Handelnden. Narrativ greift *Proof* Auburns

[208] Auburn, David: 2001, p.31.
[209] Auburn, David: 2001, p.33.
[210] Auburn, David: 2001, p.35.

häufigstes Sujet, den Generationskonflikt zwischen Eltern und Kindern, auf. Die Beziehung zwischen *Catherine* und ihrem Vater *Robert* ist der Kern der Geschichte, es ist die Bindung, die am meisten fasziniert und trotz ihrer Dysfunktion berührend wirkt. Die Tochter gibt ihr eigenes Leben aus Liebe zum Vater auf oder verwendet den Vater vielleicht als Ausrede, ihr eigenes Leben nicht zu leben.

In jedem Fall ist eine Auseinandersetzung zwischen Kind und Elternteil, ein Spannungsverhältnis, in dem sich jeder Rezipient auf seine Art und Weise wieder findet.

Die Liebesgeschichte zwischen *Catherine* und *Hal*, wenn auch als ausgeprägter narrativer Strang in *Proof*, ist wieder einmal nicht Auburns Fokus.

Proof ist ein geradliniges Stück mit einem geschlossenen Ende, welches keine Fragen offen lässt. Es ist ein US-amerikanisches Stück, mit zahlreichen Referenzen zu Chicago und New York, sowie typisch nordamerikanischen Details wie „Bagels.[211]“ Es ist zugänglich und trotzdem raffiniert, weshalb auch sein Erfolg keine große Überraschung darstellt.

III.4. Der Weg von *Proof* zum Pulitzer-Preis

Als Antwort auf meine Frage, wann er realisiert hatte, dass dieses Theaterstück sein Leben verändern würde, antwortete David Auburn wie folgt:

> << I didn't think it would ever change my life. I thought, I thought, as I was I writing it, I thought it was coming together very well, it was a very exhilarating thing, process to write but I just had a ball writing, ahm, and I was excited to have written it. And then, there was a, as I began to send it out to friends and have other people read it and eventually tried to get theaters to read it I went through the usual sort of writers pendulum thing of thinking of "this really pretty good" and thinking "this is ridiculous, no one's ever going to want to look at this play" so, so I certainly didn't have a sense that it would be any kind of breakthrough..>>[212]

[211] Vgl. Auburn, David: 2001, p.21.
[212] Interview mit David Auburn: Anhang, p.86.

Auburn dachte, wahrscheinlich würde er *Proof* im besten Falle mit seinen Freunden in New York selbst produzieren, und dieser Gedanke hatte auch in gewissem Sinne Einfluss auf die Struktur des Stückes. Ein Vier-Personen-Stück, welches nur ein minimales Bühnenbild braucht, kann auch mit geringen finanziellen Mitteln produziert werden. Da es schon einige seiner Kurzstücke, wie *Skyscraper,* in New York auf die Bühne geschafft hatten und Auburn einen Agenten hatte, wusste er, er würde das Stück gelesen und produziert bekommen. Doch, dass *Proof* mit 917 Vorstellungen Broadways meist gespieltes Stück des Jahrzehnts werden sollte, war natürlich zu Begin noch unvorstellbar.[213]

Die künstlerischen Leiter des Manhattan Theater Club, eine der erfolgreichsten US Theaterorganisationen und Produzenten zahlreicher Pulitzer-Preis Sieger, hatten David Auburn jedoch schon seit *Skyscraper* im Visier, <<they sort of said 'you're on our radar' like 'keep us in mind, send us your next play, we'll read it'>>[214]

Proof feierte schließlich seine off-Broadway Premiere am 23. Mai 2000 im Manhattan Theater Club. Für Daniel Sullivan sollte es nach Wendy Wassersteins *The Heidi Chronicals*[215] das zweite Pulitzer-Preis gewinnende Stück sein, bei welchem er die Regie der Uraufführung führt. Trotz langjähriger Erfahrung und zahlreicher Bühnenerfolge, behandelte Sullivan den jungen Dramatiker, David Auburn, mit viel Respekt und folgte der Tradition des amerikanischen Theaters, die Vision des Autors zu verwirklichen und sie nicht durch Regieeingriffe zu verbiegen, wie Auburn in unserem Interview berichtete.[216]

Star der Produktion, war die weibliche Hauptrolle der Catherine, die Mary Louise Parker spielte. Auch für Mary Louise sollte es die zweite Hauptrolle in einem Pulitzer-Preis gewinnenden Stück sein, nach Paula Vogels *How I Learned to Drive*[217] und ihr erster Tony-Award als beste Schauspielerin in einem Theaterstück.

---

[213] vgl. Boneau, Chris und Bryan-Brown Adrian: Stand: 1. Februar 2010
[214] Interview mit David Auburn: Anhang, p.86.
[215] Pulitzer Preis für Drama 1989
[216] vgl. Interview mit David Auburn: Anhang, p.104.
[217] Pulitzer Preis für Drama 1998

Der Manhattan Theater Club verfügt über ein starkes Abonnementpublikum, somit war der Anfang von *Proof* gesichert, wie Chris Boneau, der mit seiner Firma Boneau/Bryan-Brown die PR übernommen hat, berichtete. Da das Stück seiner Meinung ein truly <<beautifully constructed play>>[218] mit vielen Überraschungsmomenten ist, war die Mundpropaganda so stark, dass die Produktion schnell ein Hit wurde und am 24. Oktober 2000 seine Broadway- Premiere im Walter Kerr Theatre feierte. Chris Boneau, der bei fünf, der letzten neuen Pulitzer Preis gewinnenden Stücke Pressevertreter war hat über *Proof*s Eignung für den renommierten Preis folgendes gesagt:

<<it's a perfect example of a play by an a kind of unknown playwright that fit the mold of what they want in a Pulitzer Prize winning play. It's a, and plus, if you think about plays that have won the Pulitzer recently "Wit", ah, "Proof", "Doubt" ahm, they are small casts, usually one set and they can be done by theaters around the country and around the world.>>[219]

Im selben Jahr waren auch Edward Albees *The Play about the Baby* und Kenneth Lonnergans *The Waverly Gallery* nominiert, doch *Proof* war eindeutig der Liebling der Kritiker.
Proof wurde von der *New York Times*, welche den größten Einfluss mit ihren Kritiken hat, überaus gelobt. Bruce Weber schreibt in seiner *New York Times* Kritik vom 24. Mai 2000 folgendes:

<<"Proof," an exhilarating and assured new play by David Auburn that turns the esoteric world of higher mathematics literally into a back porch drama, one that is as accessible and compelling as a detective story.>>[220]

Kritischer hingegen äußerte sich Linda Winer am 25. Oktober in Newsday:

<< We may not be the best judge of that. We admit we were surprised when "Proof," the first major production by a promising newcomer named David Auburn, became a hot ticket at the Manhattan Theatre Club last spring. We were at least as surprised to learn that this modest family play about a mathematician's family was selected to attempt the leap from Off-Broadway. Now "Proof" opened last night at the Walter Kerr Theatre, and we are no closer to understanding the faith in its broad

[218] Interview mit Chris Boneau: Anhang, p.123.
[219] Interview mit Chris Boneau: Anhang, p.123.
[220] Weber, Bruce: Stand: 31.12.2010

appeal.>>[221]

Doch trotz ihrer eigenen kritischen Haltung gegenüber *Proof* gewann es den Pulitzer-Preis in einem Jahr, in dem sie selbst Vorsitzende des Komitees war. Der Erfolg von *Proof* bei den meisten Kritikern, der Pulitzer-Jury und dem Publikum liegt sicherlich nicht zuletzt an seiner allgemeinen Zugänglichkeit, oder womöglich gar auch in seinem zugänglichen Mittelmass, wie es auch Regisseur Terence Lamude in unserem Interview beschrieben hat:

<<I thought there was a very strong possibility because there is a certain type of play that the Pulitzer as a committee seems to award the best drama to and it tends to be what I call "middlebrow", which are interesting plays always with curious subject matter and it's usually very American about American life but it also, it flatters the audience, in this case because of mathematics, it flatters the audience into thinking that it is more intelligent than it actually is. And not to say that the audience is not intelligent but I am not sure many mathematicians were in the house, you know. But because it really isn't about mathematics but it gets just, just; it's more intelligent than it really is, I think in that sense it flatters the audience. I think that is, with some exception of course, what wins the Pulitzer Prize.>>[222]

III.5. *Proof* – die filmische Adaption

Nach dem großen Bühnenerfolg und dem Gewinn vieler Preise, kamen für David Auburn zahlreiche Angebote, sein Theaterstück als Drehbuch zu adaptieren. Er entschied sich schließlich, seine Rechte der kleinen Produktionsfirma Hart-Sharp zu verkaufen, um damit auch möglichst viel Kontrolle über seinen Stoff zu bewahren. Die Filmrechte wurden später von Hart-Sharp an die weitaus größere Produktionsfirma Miramax verkauft. Dies brachte natürlich ein größeres Budget mit sich, welches in Folge auch bekanntere Filmemacher anzog.[223]

Zu diesem Zeitpunkt begannen sich Regisseur John Madden und Hollywoodstar Gwyneth Paltrow für das Projekt zu interessieren. Die beiden hatten zuvor schon sehr erfolgreich gemeinsam an dem Film *Shakespeare in Love* gearbeitet. Im Jahr 2002 hat John Madden bei *Proof*

[221] Winer, Linda, 25.Oktober 2000.
[222] Interview mit Terence Lamude: Anhang, p.148.
[223] vgl. Interview mit David Auburn: Anhang, p.92.

im Donmar Warehouse in London Regie geführt und dort schon Gwyneth Paltrow in der Rolle der *Catherine* besetzt.
Die künstlerische Beziehung zwischen Auburn und Madden war jedoch eine schlechte. Die beiden konnten sich auf die Art und Weise der Adaption nicht einigen, was schlussendlich dazu führte, dass David Auburns Drehbuch Version von Autorin Rebecca Miller und John Madden[224] selbst überarbeitet wurde. Ein Ergebnis mit welchem Auburn nicht zufrieden war und sich auch gegen das Angebot einer neuerlichen Überarbeitung entschied:

> <<I just, I didn't like any of the work that they had done together and I didn't feel I could work from that, it just seemed like a big mistake, it just seemed it would not have been fruitful to have worked that way. So I think that the final movie - so then John did some tinkering on his own and a lot of what he did was, from my view of the film, was go back to play and just take big chunks of the play an put it back into the movie, so the final film is a kind of weird - I don't think there was ever a shooting script to the film in a way. It is a kind of weird mishmash of my original screenplay, a few small contributions from Rebecca Miller and then chunks of the play that were imported back into the film script in, I think, a very awkward way. So, I think in a way, even though, even though the movie is more faithful to the play than my original draft it's actually less affective 'cause long sequences play out simply as performances of the play, which I don't is cinematic and makes it interesting.>>[225]

Der Film kam im Jahr 2005 in die US-amerikanischen Kinos. Das Ensemble bestand, wie bei so vielen Adaptionen Pulitzer-Preis gewinnender Stücke, aus renommierten Filmschauspielern: Gwyneth Paltrow spielte die Hauptrolle der *Catherine,* die Vaterfigur *Richard* personifizierte Anthony Hopkins, die Rolle des Mathematikers *Hal* wurde mit Jake Gyllenhaal besetzt und Hope Davis spielte Schwester *Claire*.
Im Vergleich zu dem Theaterstück waren die Pressekritiken, den Film betreffend, leider weniger enthusiastisch. So beginnt die Kritik von Manohola Dargis, der führenden Filmkritikerin der *New York Times* mit den Worten:

---

[224] Es werden David Auburn und Rebecca Miller als Drehbuchautoren angeführt. Vgl. Internet Movie Data Base www.imdb.com
[225] Interview mit David Auburn: Anhang, p.94.

<< It's funny how movies about smart people often play so dumb.>>[226]

III.5.1. Adaptionsentscheidungen

Von der Handlungsweise der Figuren und dem Handlungsverlauf der Geschichte, weicht der Film nur sehr sanft ab.

Wie auch David Auburn selbst sagt, handelt es sich um eine sehr treue Verfilmung der Bühnenvorlage. Dies kann aber leicht als Schwäche des Filmes angeführt werden, da viele der dialoglastigen Szenen einen bühnenhaften Charakter haben. Dementsprechend sind sie sehr lange, auf einen begrenzten Raum beschränkt und leben fast ausschließlich von nahen bis halbnahen Schuss – Gegenschuss Einstellungen. Musik spielt in dem Film eine untergeordnete Rolle und ist kaum mehr als Geräuschkulisse.

Die filmeigenen, neuen Aspekte der Geschichte beschränken sich beinahe nur auf eine verstärkte Anzahl von Rückblenden. Diese kommen auch in Form von ganz neuen Szenen vor, sowie in Momenten, die im Stück nur erwähnt werden. So beispielsweise das erste Zusammentreffen von *Catherine* und *Hal,* welches im Film als Rückblende in Form von Zwischenschnitten während der ersten Szene gezeigt wird und im Stück nebenbei erwähnt wird.

Der Regisseur versucht auch den Szenen mehr Dynamik zu verleihen, in dem er die Schauspieler durch die einzelnen Zimmer des Hauses geschickt hat.

Charaktereigenschaften der Figuren bleiben im Film die gleichen, wie sie auch im Theaterstück beschrieben werden. Eine produktionsbedingte Entscheidung des Films ist, dass das Alter von *Catherine* und *Hal* ein anderes ist, um es den Schauspielern Gwyneth Paltrow und Jake Gyllenhaal anzupassen.

III.5.2. Anfangssequenz

Um Film und Theaterstück genauer zu vergleichen wird hier exemplarisch die erste Szene beschrieben.

---

[226] Dargis, Manohola: Stand: 31.12.2010

Das Theaterstück fängt damit an, dass *Catherine* mit geschlossenen Augen auf der Veranda sitzt bis sie ihr Vater schließlich mit <<Can't sleep?>>[227] erschreckt. Innerhalb der Unterhaltung erfahren wir, dass der Vater eigentlich schon tot ist und somit nur Produkt ihrer Fantasie ist. *Catherine* schreckt wieder hoch, als *Hal* die Szene betritt und die Figur *Robert* die Szene verlässt.
Der Rest der Szene ist ein Dialog zwischen *Hal* und *Catherine* auf der Veranda bis *Hal* das Haus verlässt.
Der Vorspann des Filmes beginnt mit einem schwarzen Hintergrund und dem Geräusch von Regen und einer eindringlichen Instrumentalmusik. Das erste Bild ist eine Nahaufnahme von Gartenpflanzen im Regen, wobei im Hintergrund unscharf schon das Familienhaus zu sehen ist. Als nächstes kommen zu der Instrumentalmusik Fernsehgeräusche hinzu, die ein Wechseln von Televerkaufskanälen indizieren. Die Kamera fährt langsam von links nach rechts und das Haus im Hintergrund kommt allmählich in den Fokus. Durch die nassen Fenster können wir eine Art Wintergarten und den Fernseher wahrnehmen, dann eine Nahaufnahme der regenüberströmten Glasscheibe des Fensters. Schließlich bei 1.13min Schnitt ins Haus hinein zu einer Nahaufnahme von *Catherines* Hand, in welcher sie die Fernbedienung hält. Schnitt zu dem Fernseher und dann eine Kamerafahrt innerhalb des Hauses und bei 1.26min sehen wir zum ersten Mal *Catherines* Gesicht. Dann Schnitt auf den Fernseher und wieder zurück auf *Catherine*, die den Fernseher gedankenverloren anstarrt und dann seitlich der Kamera vorbei blickt. Schnitt zu der ersten Rückblende, in der wir vorerst nur für wenige Sekunden herbstliche Blätter sehen. Dann Schnitt zurück zu *Catherine* im Wintergarten und bei 1.52min erscheint der Titel des Filmes *Proof*. Die Musik und die Fernsehgeräusche bleiben als akustischer Hintergrund, auch bei dem erneuten Schnitt zur Rückblende, in der wir *Catherine* auf einem Fahrrad durch einen Stadtpark fahren sehen können. Die nächste Minute ist es ein ständiger Schnittwechsel zwischen der Rückblende, die den Weg von *Catherine* zu der Universität und schließlich zu einem Seminarraum zeigt, und der Gegenwart, die sie vor dem Fernseher zeigt. Der Schnittwechsel

[227] Auburn, David: 2001, p.5.

suggeriert, dass *Catherine* an die in der Rückblende gezeigten Momente denkt. Bei 2.44min während einer Rückblende kommt die erste Zeile Text „Can't sleep?" von *Robert* aus dem off, gleich darauf stößt *Catherine* auf dem Gang der Universität mit *Hal* zusammen und Schnitt zurück in die Gegenwart, in der *Catherine* aufschreckt, da *Robert* den Raum betreten hat. John Madden hat in den ersten Minuten gleich von der Raum- und Zeitunabhängigkeit der Kunstform Film Gebrauch gemacht und zeigt dadurch die wichtigsten Figuren innerhalb der ersten drei Minuten

Nun beginnt die eigentliche Szene, dem Theaterstück sehr getreu, in welcher sich *Catherine* und *Robert* durch die Räume des Hauses während ihres Dialoges bewegen. Bis *Hal,* wie im Theaterstück die beiden, unterbricht nachdem der Zuschauer erfahren hat, dass *Richard* schon tot ist und nur in der Einbildung von *Catherine* lebt. So ist im Film, wie in der Bühnenfassung, *Richard* nach *Hals* Erscheinen verschwunden.

Abschließend sei zu sagen, dass John Madden den Spagat zwischen Treue zum Ursprungsmaterial und einer wahrhaft cinematographischen Erfahrung nicht geschafft hat, da *Proof* als Film sich leider zu wenig von abgefilmten Theater abhebt.

III.5.3. Proof – die Ausnahme?

Natürlich liegt die Annahme nahe, dass *Proof* einfach ein schlecht adaptiertes Stück ist und somit eine Ausnahme darstellt. Eine extensive Sichtung adaptierter Dramen, die mit dem Pulitzerpreis prämiert wurden, zeigt jedoch, dass eine werkgetreue und zugleich filmische Darstellung immer Schwierigkeiten mit sich bringt.

Im Jahr 2000, ein Jahr vor *Proof,* hat das Vier-Personen-Stück *Dinner with Friends* von Donald Margulies den begehrten Preis erhalten. Es handelt von zwei gut befreundeten Ehepaaren und der Bedeutung, des Verfalls der Partnerschaft eines Paares, für alle Figuren.

Das Drama wurde 2001 von Regisseur Norman Jewison für den Privatfernsehsender HBO verfilmt mit renommierten Schauspielern verfilmt[228]. Das Drehbuch zeigt nur eine nur wenig veränderte Version des Theaterstücks. So liefen die Schauspieler durch die Außen- und

[228] Dennis Quaid, Greg Kinnear, Andie MacDowell und Toni Collette.

Innenräume eines Gebäudes während, sie die Dialoge sprachen. Auf der Bühne hatten sie sich nur auf einem abgegrenzten Raum bewegt. Eine Rezension im Branchenblatt *Variety* spricht dies an:

> <<Keeping the integrity of Margulies' seven scenes intact, Jewison adds establishing shots, spare intercutting between simultaneous scenes and some additional movement to keep scenes from feeling visually stagnant.>>[229]

Wit von Margaret Edson gewann den Pulitzer-Preis 1999. Eigentlich wurde das Stück schon 1998 eingereicht, doch schaffte es dieses Werk nicht einmal unter die Finalisten.[230] Da die Jury schließlich von der Theateraufführung so begeistert war, konnten die Regeln etwas großzügiger ausgelegt und das Stück im darauf folgenden Jahr prämiert werden.[231] Ebenfalls im Auftrag von HBO wurde *Wit* im Jahr 2001 unter der Regie von Mike Nichols verfilmt. Emma Thompson spielt die krebskranke, brillante Professorin.
Das Drehbuch stammt vom Regisseur und der Hauptdarstellerin und zeigt nur minimale Veränderungen des Theaterstücks. Sowohl Struktur als auch Szenenabfolge werden fast durchgehend eingehalten, inklusive der langen Monologe, welche die Schauspielerin direkt in die Kamera spricht. Filmische Mittel werden nur dort eingesetzt, wo sie notwendig sind, wie in der *New York Times* beschrieben:

> <<In the play, Vivian walks onto the stage set of her former life, but here Mr. Nichols has constructed a more subtle blend. As a child, Vivian reads Beatrix Potter and becomes enraptured by words. Harold Pinter plays her father and in his only scene captures a wealth of paternal pride and emotion while he sits in an easy chair reading a newspaper. At times a child portrays the young Vivian sitting at his feet; then in a flash Ms. Thompson, in her hospital gown and baseball cap, takes the child's place on the living room floor.<<[232]

Nach *Proof* wurde im Jahr 2008 das Theaterstück *Doubt* verfilmt, welches 2005 den Pulitzer-Preis gewonnen hatte. Der Autor John Patrick Shanley

---

[229] Oxman, Steven: Stand: 20.03.2011
[230] 1998 gewann *How I Learned to Drive* von Paula Vogel
[231] vgl. Interview mit Linda Winer: Anhang, p.172.
[232] James, Caryn: Stand: 22.03.2011

selbst adaptierte sein Stück und führte auch Regie. Die Produktion übernahm – wie bei *Proof* – die Firma Miramax.
Shanleys Bemühungen um eine unverkrampfte Adaption sind bemerkbar: Es gibt zahlreiche „Establishing shots", Dialoge wurden umgeordnet, Szenen wurden geteilt, um sie an verschiedenen Orten spielen zu lassen. Schließlich treten Figuren auf, die im Theaterstück nur beschrieben werden.
Die Problematik dieser Verfilmung zeigt sich weniger in der Adaption als in der Natur und Thematik des Stoffes. Die Geschichte von „Doubt" beruht, wie der Titel verrät, auf einem Zweifel. „Doubt" handelt von einer katholischen Schule in der Bronx im Jahre 1964. Ein Priester steht unter dem Verdacht, den ersten afroamerikanischen Schüler dieser Anstalt sexuell missbraucht zu haben. Im Stück treten vier Figuren auf: zwei Klosterschwestern, der Priester und die Mutter des möglichen Opfers. Auf der Bühne steht Aussage gegen Aussage. Das Kind betritt nie die Bühne. Der Zuschauer ist angehalten, selbst Zweifel zu haben. Der moderne Film funktioniert jedoch anders, wie die Kritikerin Manhola Dargis in der *New York Times* in einer wenig schmeichelhaften Kritik darlegt:

> <<As its title announces, "Doubt" isn't about certainty, but ambiguity, that no man's land between right and wrong, black and white. This gray zone paradoxically can be easier to grapple with on the stage, where ideas sometimes range more freely because they are not tethered to representations of the real world. Mainstream moviemaking, with its commercial directives and slavish attachment to narrative codes, by contrast, isn't particularly hospitable to ambiguity. It insists on clear parameters, tidy endings, easy answers and a world divided into heroes and villains, which may help explain why Mr. Shanley's film feels caught between two mediums (…) >>[233]

Wirkliche Ausnahmen in der Adaptionsweise bieten nur wenige Stücke. Die Verfilmung von *Lost in Yonkers*, dem 1991 prämierten Stück von Neil Simon, ist eine sehr filmische Version des Theaterstücks. Zwar gibt es auch im Stück „voice-overs", doch werden diese in dem Film aus dem Jahr 1993 extensiver genützt, da sie sich hier verstärkt anbieten. Die Geschichte handelt von zwei Knaben, die im Jahre 1942 in der Obhut ihrer Großmutter in Yonkers, New York, bleiben müssen, während der Vater

[233] Dargis, Manhola: Stand: 24.03.2011

arbeitet, um Schulden abzuzahlen, die durch den Krebstod der Mutter entstanden sind.

Neil Simon, der auch das Drehbuch verfasst hat, bleibt bei seiner Adaption der Geschichte und den Figuren treu, nicht jedoch der Struktur des Theaterstücks. Somit schafft er den Sprung ins Medium Film. Columbia Pictures übernahm die Produktion und Regie führte die Fernsehregisseurin Martha Coolidge. Sie stellte vermehrt die Attribute der 1940er Jahre heraus und benützte die Farbpalette, die der Süßwarenladen der Großmutter bot, als bildhafte Kulisse. Doch gerade diese Bildhaftigkeit wurde von der *New York Times* bemängelt:

<<As adapted by Mr. Simon himself and directed smoothly and adroitly by Martha Coolidge, Neil Simon's "Lost in Yonkers" is sometimes more picturesque than powerful. But it conveys all the warmth and color of the original material.>>[234]

Eine der meist gelobten Adaptionen ist *Angels in America*, welche (wie auch zuvor *Wit)* von Mike Nichols für HBO verfilmt wurde. Tony Kushner hat mit dem ersten Teil des Epos *Angles in America, Millennium Approaches* 1993 den Pulitzer-Preis für Drama gewonnen und es auch selbst adaptiert. Die Besetzung der sechsteiligen Miniserie *Angles in America* erfolgte mit Stars wie Meryl Streep, Emma Thompson und Mary-Louise Parker. Drei Schauspielerinnen, die – wie bereits erwähnt – schon in Pulitzer-Preis gekrönten Stücken bzw. deren Adaptionen zu sehen waren. Bei *Doubt* war die Geschichte problematisch für die Verfilmung, bei *Angles in America* ist es die Geschichte, welche die filmische Adaption zu einem wünschenswerten nächsten Schritt macht. Das Stück beinhaltet viele surreale Momente und Traumsequenzen, die schon bei der Lektüre als Film leichter vorstellbar sind:

<<(...) the whole building shudders and a part of the bedroom ceiling, lots of plaster and lathe and wiring, crashes to the floor. And then a shower of unearthly white light, spreading great opalescent gray-silver wings, and the Angel descends into the room and floats above the bed.>>[235]

[234] Maslin, Janet: Stand: 21.03.2011
[235] Kushner, Tony: 1995, p.124.

Auch die Anzahl von 21 Figuren ist leichter in einem Film umsetzbar als auf der Bühne. Kushner lässt zwar alle Figuren von acht Schauspielern spielen, doch auch diese Anzahl ist für das Theater der Gegenwart schon aus ökonomischen Gründen sehr untypisch. Die Verfilmung benützt allerdings das Auftreten von Schauspielern in mehreren Rollen als interessantes Stilmittel und so ist Meryl Streep sowohl als mormonische Mutter, älterer Rabbi und auch als Spionin Ethel Rosenberg in der Miniserie zu sehen. Genau diese Aspekte machen *Angles in America: Millennium Approaches* zu einem interessanten Werk, sowohl als Theaterstück, das seine allzu leicht gezogenen Grenzen gerne überschreitet, als auch in der verfilmten Version, die ungewohnte Mittel der Bühne gekonnt in Stilmittel verwandelt:

<<Just as there was no real precedent for the achievement "Angels in America" represented in the legitimate theater, so are there few film adaptations of stage works comparable to what Mike Nichols has done with Tony Kushner's two-part epic. Fully capturing the grandeur, extravagance, urgency, poetry and humor of the produced play, the savvy veteran director has brought out an elemental dimension of emotional melodrama that makes the piece compulsive screen fare without subtracting one bit from its status as great theater.>>[236]

Als größte Problematik der Adaption von Theaterstücken stellt sich der Vergleich mit dem ursprünglichen Bühnenwerk heraus. Die Annahme, dass die Aussagen des Original-Stückes, stets die eigentlichen seien, lässt die übertragene Form immer nur als Kopie dastehen.
Einen Film mit dem Wissen zu sehen, dass der Inhalt von einem Theaterstück stammt, hemmt den Rezipienten, diesen Film als eigenständiges Kunstwerk wahrzunehmen und unabhängige Schlüsse zu ziehen.
Davon kann abgeleitet werden, dass sich der Vergleich der beiden Werke wohl für den wissenschaftlichen Diskurs eignet. Er trägt jedoch nicht dazu bei, die positive Aufnahme und das Wohlgefallen eines Filmes oder eines Theaterstückes selbst zu steigern.

[236] McCarthy, Todd: Stand: 28.03.2011

Schlussbemerkung

Die Adaption scheint das Resultat eines Prozesses zu sein, der darauf hinzielt, den Autor finanziell unabhängig zu machen und durch die Bekanntheit eines Pulitzer-Preis gewinnenden Stoffes, die Finanzierung eines gleichnamigen Filmprojekts erheblich erleichtert.

Zu Beginn meiner Recherche dachte ich noch, dass Dramatiker ihre Kunstwerke schlicht an den Meistbietenden verkaufen, ohne auf den künstlerischen Wert zu achten. Interessant und erschreckend zu gleich war für mich die Entdeckung, dass kein Dramatiker nur von dem Verfassen von Bühnentexten leben könnte. Somit geht es nicht um einen bloßen einmaligen materiellen Gewinn, sondern darum, tatsächlich Einnahmequellen zu finden, die ermöglichen, das zeitgenössische Theater als solches am Leben zu erhalten. Film und Fernsehen mit ihrem Massenpublikum kommen hier nun mal zu Hilfe.

In meiner Arbeit spiegelt sich auch ein Stück des „American Dream“ wieder, sowohl in der Entstehung des Pulitzer-Preises, als auch in dem ganzen Prozess, der es Autoren durch Verfilmungen ermöglicht, tatsächlich von „Rags to Riches“ zu kommen.

Bibliographie

Primärliteratur

Auburn, David. *Fifth Planted and Other Plays.* New York: Dramatists Play Service, Inc., 2002.

Auburn, David. *Proof.* New York: Dramatists Play Service, Inc., 2001.

Auburn, David. *Skyscraper.* New York: Dramatists Play Service, Inc., 1998.

Auburn, David. *The Journals of Mihail Sebastian.* New York: Dramatists Play Service, Inc., 2004.

Kushner, Tony. *Angles in America.* New York: Theatre Communications Group, 1995.

Sekundärliteratur

Aristoteles. *Die Poetik.* Stuttgard: Reclam jun. GmbH & Co., 1982.

Asmuth, Bernhard. *Einführung in die Dramenanalyse.* Stuttgard: J.B. Metzlersche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 2004.

Bates, J. Douglas. *The Pulizer Prize. The Inside Story of America's Most Prestigious Award.* New York: A Brich Lane Press Book Published by Carol Publishing Group, 1991.

Baker, Richard Terril. *A History of The Graduate School of Journalism. Columbia University.* New York: Columbia University Press, 1954.

Braun, Michael und Kamp, Werner. „Vorwort." *Kontext Film. Beiträge zu Film und Literatur.* Berlin: Erich Schmidt Verlag GmbH & Co., 2006.

Brian, Crystal. „Interview with Horton Foote." *The Playwright's Muse.* Hg. Joan Herrington. New York: Routeledge, 2002. p.207-209.

Brian, Denis. *Pulitzer. A Life.* New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2001.

Bryan, Tom. „Interview with Robert Schenkkan." *The Playwright's Muse.* Hg. Joan Herrington. New York: Routeledge, 2002. p.121-126.

Cahir, Linda Costanzo. *Literature into Film. Theory and Practical Approaches.* Jefferson: McFarland & Company, Inc., Publishers, 2006.

Czekay, Angelika. „Interview with Wendy Wasserstein." *The Playwright's*

Muse. Hg. Joan Herrington. New York: Routeledge, 2002. p.45-51.

Desmond, John M. und Hawkes, Peter. *Adaptation: Studying Film and Literature.* New York: McGraw-Hill, 2006.

English, James F. *The Economy of Prestige. Prizes, Awards, and the Circulation of Cultural Value.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005.

Firestone, Paul A.. *The Pulitzer Prize Plays. The First Fifty Years. A Dramatic Reflection of American Life.* Milwaukee: Limelight Editions, 2008.

Fischer, Heinz-D. und Fischer, Erika J.. *Complete Historical Handbook of the Pulitzer Prize System 1917 – 2000. Decision-Making Processes in all Award Categories based on unpublished Sources.* München: K.G. Saur Verlag GmbH, 2003.

Gifford, Dennis. *Books and Plays in Film, 1896-1915. Literay, Theatrical and Artistic Sources of the First Twenty Years of Motion Pictures.* London: Mansell Publishing Limited, 1991.

Herrington, Joan. "Interview with August Wilson." *The Playwright's Muse.* Hg. Joan Herrington. New York: Routeledge, 2002. p. 91-97.

Hohenberg, John. *The Pulitzer Prizes. A History of Awards in Books, Drama, Music, and Journalism, Based on the Private Files over Six Decades.* New York: Columbia University Press, 1974.

Knopf, Robert. „Introduction." *Theater and Film. A Comparative Anthology.* Hg. Robert Knopf. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005.

Kranz, David L. und Mellerski, Nancy C.. „Introduction." *In/Fidelity: Essays on Film Adaptation.* Hg. David L. Kranzund Nancy C. Mellerski. Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2008. P. 1-11.

Letwin, David und Stockdale, Joe und Stockdale, Robin. *The Architecture of Drama. Plot, Character, Theme, Genre, and Style.* Lanham: Scarecrow Press, Inc., 2008.

London, Todd und Pesner, Ben mit Giraud Voss, Zannie. *Outrageous Fortune. The life and times of the new american play.* New York: Theatre Development Fund, 2009.

Mandl, Bette. "Interview with Neil Simon." *The Playwright's Muse.* Hg. Joan Herrington. New York: Routeledge, 2002. p. 91-97.

Minwalla, Framji. "Interview with Tony Kushner." *The Playwright's Muse.* Hg. Joan Herrington. New York: Routeledge, 2002. p. 145-158.

Pfister, Manfred. *Das Drama. 9.Auflage.* München: Wilhelm Fink Verlag GmbH & Co., 1997.

Phillips, Gene D.. *Conrad and Cinema. The Art of Adaptation.* New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 1995.

Primavesi, Patrick. „Stimme ± Körper. Interferenzen zwischen Theater und Performance." *Performance. Positionen zur zeitgenössischen szenischen Kunst.* Hg. Gabriele Klein und Wolfgang Sting. Bielefeld: 2005. p. 165-181.

Schlickers, Sabine. *Verfilmtes Erzählen.* Frankfurt am Main: Vervuert Verlag, 1997.

Schwab, Ulrike. *Erzähltext und Spielfilm. Zur Ästhetik und Analyse der Filmadaption.* Berlin: Lit Verlag, 2006.

Toohey, John L.. *A History of the Pulitzer Prize Plays.* New York: The Citadel Press, 1967.

Weber, Alfred. „Eine Einführung" *Film und Literatur in America.* Hg. Alfred Weber und Bettina Friedl. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1988. p. 1-19.

Zeitungen, Zeitschriften

Pulitzer, Joseph. „The College of Journalism." *The North American Review. Vol. 178/No. 5,* May 1904: 642ff.

Bennetts, Leslie. "Something About Meryl." *Vanity Fair* No. 593 Jan. 2010: 62ff.

Winer, Linda. „ Parker Provides Proof of Emotional Honesty." *Newsday.* 25. Oktober 2000: B.11.

Internetquellen

Artikel

Dargis, Manhola. „Solving for X: Is She Crazy or a Math Mastermind?" *The New York Times On The Web.* 16. September 2005. **Stand:** 31. Dezember 2010

Dargis, Manhola. „Between Heaven and Earth, Room for Ambiguity" *The New York Times On The Web.* 12. Dezember 2008. **Stand:** 24. März 2011

James, Caryn. „Death, Mighty Thou Art; So Too, a Compassionate Heart." *The New York Times On The Web.* 23. März 2001. **Stand:** 23. März 2011

Maslin, Janette. "Simon's Serious Comedy Of Contemporary Nostalgia." *The New York Times On The Web*. 14. Mai 1993. ***Stand:*** 21. März 2011

McCarthy, Todd. "Angles in America." *Variety.* 30. November 2003. **Stand:** 28. März 2011

Oxman, Steven. „Dinner With Friends." *Variety.* 8. August 2001. **Stand:** 20. März 2011

Weber, Bruce. "Confusion Over the Pulitzer." *The New York Times On The Web*. 15. April 1994. **Stand:** 14. Dezember 2009

Weber, Bruce. „THEATER REVIEW. A Common Heart and Uncomon Brain." *The New York Times On The Web.* 24. Mai 2000. **Stand:** 31. Dezember 2010

Websites

Boneau, Chris und Bryan-Brown, Adrian. BBB Blogger. http://bbbblogger.wordpress.com. **Stand:** 1. Februar 2010

Columbia University: The Pulitzer Prizes. Honering excellence in journalism and the arts since 1917. www.pulitzer.org. **Stand:** Dezember 2009

Freestone, Denise Burson und Freestone, Bruce K: Openstage. Theater & Company. www.openstagetheatre.org **Stand:** 1. Februar 2010

Nash, Bruce: The Numbers. www.the-numbers.com **Stand:** 9. Januar 2010

Wales, Jimmy: Wikipedia. Free Enyclopedia. www.wikipedia.com **Stand:** Dezember 2009

Rokem, Freddie: All About Jewish Theater. www.jewish-theatre.com **Stand:** 1. Februar 2010

The Broadway League: Internet Broadway Data Base. www.ibdb.com

Stand: 31. Januar 2010

IMDb.com, Inc.: The Internet Movie Data Base. www.imdb.com

Stand: 23.November 2010

Film

Proof. Regie: John Madden. Drehbuch: David Auburn, Rebecca Miller. USA: Miramx, 2005.

Anhang

Interview mit David Auburn vom 22. Januar 2010 – geführt und transkribiert von Katharina Sporrer

Katharina Sporrer: Great, thank you first of all, so you have both written plays and screenplays, do you still consider yourself more of a playwright or a screenwriter or where are you on that scale of things for yourself?

David Auburn: I just think of myself as both, a screen – a playwright and a screenwriter.

KS: And director as well now?

DA: And a director in theater and film, so yes all of the above.

KS: All of the above. In an interview with filmcatcher that I saw on youtube, after "A Girl in the Park", you said you always wanted to do film, so was theater in a way just a very successful detour, or?

DA: No, I did always want to do film but I always wanted to be a playwright. So I did a little bit of both at the beginning of my career and then I saw very quickly that I could learn a lot more and get a lot more work done and have a lot more fun trying to be a playwright than trying to be a screenwriter. I had friends who were in New York trying to start theater companies and things like that and it just seemed like a much smarter and more artistic rewarding way to sort of like spend an apprenticeship.

KS: (I am just going to put that (MICROPHONE) more towards you, I feel,might be a good idea .I am sorry, this little thing.) So you feel it was more of a learning experience and you could actually be more involved with your product as well, if I am right, because you mentioned artistic control.

DA: Well the barriers of entry are so much lower for the theater, you could put on a show obviously anywhere and have an experience that's absolutely as rewarding for you and for the audience as the biggest, most elaborate Broadway show, so,so, I am glad I did it that way and I guess, if given the choice, I would rather, if I could only do one thing, I would rather only be a playwright but I am glad I am able to do more than that.

KS: So did that, did you realize that especially during your time in LA when you got the Steven Spielberg fellowship, that screen writing would be much more difficult to get into and a much more competitive field?

DA: The screen writing fellowship was kind of a fluke for me because I was trying to write plays and after college what I thought what I would do be to stay in Chicago, where I knew a lot of people who have started sort of store front small theater companies and have had a certain degree of success with that and that seemed like a model that was very doable but I'd also just applied to this thing 'cause I had heard about it and almost as fluke, I think, I got in. So I did it. And I spent, about, I spent a year writing this screenplay out there. At the end of that year I was going broke and the screenplay had not sold and I thought, I think I'd rather, if I am going to be like starved, I'd rather do it trying to be a playwright in New York than trying to be a screenwriter in LA.

KS: Does that have something to do with the type of artistic respect you get for playwriting, that you are seen more as an artist then when you are doing screenwriting?

DA: Yes, I think I did not know that then but yes, I mean as the playwright, the playwright's relationship to their work in the theater is very much like the directors relationship to their work in the film, so it's the whole culture of playwriting in theater is set up theoretically to realize the playwrights vision, where as film is about the directors vision so, so if you are interested in artistic autonomy as a writer you're far better off as a playwright. Now there are a lot of rewards for screenwriting, financially not the least among them, but in terms of pleasure, I think playwriting beats screenwriting every time.

KS: As you were writing "Proof", and you started writing it in London, is that right – that is where you wrote your first draft?

DA: That's right

KS: As you were writing "Proof", when did you, when was the first moment when you thought "Man, this play could really be great." Or "This play could my life", was there ever a moment?

DA: I didn't think it would ever change my life. I thought, I thought, as I was I writing it, I thought it was coming together very well, it was a very

exhilarating thing process to write but I just had a ball writing, , and I was excited to have written it. And then, there was a, as I began to send it out to friends and have other people read it and eventually tried to get theaters to read it I went through the usual sort of writers pendulum thing of thinking of “this really pretty good” and thinking “this is ridiculous, no one’s ever going to want to look at this play” so, so I certainly didn’t have a sense that it would be any kind of breakthrough. *I’ll have a decaf cappuccino please.*

KS: I am sorry to have forgotten the name for a moment of that one theater, didn’t they already say they wanted your next play after they saw “Skyscraper”.

DA: They didn’t say that. They said, they sort of said ‘you’re on our radar’ like ‘keep us in mind, send us your next play we’ll read it’. I mean I had an agent by that time and I had some plays done professionally, so I knew a producer. I knew I could get the play read and seen. I thought the most likely outcome would be that I ended up producing it with friends, basically, I thought. And that was one of the reasons the play was written as one set, fairly simple, I mean you could do a production that really virtually had no set, it would be easy to image that kind of direction.

KS: So you did like write it with an eye to producibility as well?

DA: Well I sort of, I don’t know if it was that calculated but I just sort of assumed if it got done, it may very well be by me and a bunch of friends like scrapping together whatever money we could to do it, so.

KS: But by that time you had already founded the Keen Theater company, is that right? Or you were part of that.

DA: I didn’t, let’s see. I didn’t found it, a friend of mine did and I knew him by then but I did not, I am trying to remember how it worked, he hadn’t started that company till then.

KS: Were you involved in starting the company at all?

DA: Yes, I did join the board. When he started the company, he did ask me to be on the board of the company. And I was one of the sort of early investors in it and helped him get if off the ground.

KS: So you were not thinking about maybe putting it on there.

DA: No, the company did not exist then. I really thought either I'd do it myself or some small theater.

KS: When did you first start thinking about "Proof" in relation the "Pulitzer Prize"? When did that first come up?

DA: I had not thought about it all.

KS: Who entered it, did nobody enter it?

DA: It has to be entered by someone; I think Manhattan Theater club must have entered it. After the sort of successful off-Broadway run and it had moved to Broadway, they started, I think, I remember the first time I sort of started thinking seriously about it was when the publicist for the film called me and said, ah for the movie, the play, called me and said "they are announcing the Pulitzers on such and such a date, we want to know where you are, so that" and I remember thinking "that's ridiculous" but. So I think that was first when I was told to think about it.

KS: During the year did you watch the other productions, the other nominees? Like Edward Albee "The play about the baby" and "The Weaverly Gallery" by Kenneth Lonergan, did you see these plays?

DA: You don't know that plays are nominated before the price is announced.

KS: Yes, I do know that but –

DA: Oh, yes, I have seen them.

KS: So, yeah, did you kind of know which plays would be your competitors?

DA: I don't want to sound falsely modest because I like winning prizes, it's a lot of fun. It is not something I have never thought about but I honestly at that point was so pleased just to have written a play, first of all has been realized so beautifully and also was a hit, that I thought I gotten plenty already.

KS: 'Cause you were only 30 at the time too.

DA: To an extend too I thought maybe it would not be so good to be further rewarded for this 'cause it's more than I, you know, it's too early kind of thing. But , I didn't spend a lot of time thinking about it.

KS: So, , you haven't thought so much about it but within the world of theater how important is the Pulitzer Prize, like how much were other

playwrights talking about winning one day, was it one of your goals to win it, what would you say?

DA: It's the most important prize.

KS: More than the Tony?

DA: I think so. It's all subjective.

KS: To yourself.

DA: You know, it's a very prestigious prize.

KS: Do you know how the process actually works, do you know who chooses the plays and who decides who wins? Have you ever looked into that process?

DA: I sort of know vaguely that they have a panel that makes recommendations to a committee that then can either take one of those recommendations or can put their own candidate, I am not exactly sure, how, what the internals of it are.

KS: So you haven't, did you ever, have you ever spoken to the jury of your actual year, the theatre critics?

DA: No.

KS: Because it's funny, like recently, like you were one of the last years when it was only critics and academics. Now it's three critics, a writer usually and an academic.

DA: Right.

KS: So yours was critics and academics, in case you want to know. Okay , so, now when you go places or when you do things are you always referred to Pulitzer Prize winner David Auburn.

DA: Ah, generally, yes.

KS: And how is that for you, do you accept it or do you sometimes would like to be able to be more daring or try new things without that name attached to -

DA: No, I don't think it has inhibited me, I just see it as a kind of blessing, that you would have to be crazy to complain about or object to on any level.

KS: Right, because Neil Simon said in an interview that for the rest of his life, no matter what he did he would always be the playwright Neil Simon, he'll never be anything else because of the Pulitzer.

DA: Oh Boohoo.

KS: No, it was just the way he said it, I thought it was interesting. Okay, , did you –

DA: What is this by the way (pointing to my mindmap), what are all the branches on this tree?

KS: Oh this my mind map. So I was thinking about the different areas that I wanted to talk to you about and then the different questions that would come out of these areas.

DA: And then why am I in a little cloud in the middle?

KS: 'Cause it's all about you.

DA: Oh I see.

KS: And then all the things about you that I want to know. And because if I would have written it down that way (pointing to my list of questions) I would have not all the topics together.

DA: That's clever.

KS: Yeah. ,so as you were writing "Proof" and you were obviously writing it as a play, did you hope it was going to be turned into a movie?

DA: No.

KS: When was the first time you thought about it becoming a movie?

DA: , well people started talking about the movie sale after it became a hit.

KS: Before or after the Pulitzer.

DA: Before because it's common for, especially hit Broadway, so there was some discussion about who or who might not buy the movie rights.

KS: Because , Robert Schekkan said in a quote that most playwrights, like their greatest hope is just to sell their rights to their movies, their plays, so they can afford writing plays for longer, was that sort of?

DA: No. And I felt somewhat ambivalent about selling the movie rights. And I felt that ambivalence was well founded because I found a lot of the things that make the play work very well are sort of unique to it as a piece of stage writing but ah no, I didn't think about that. I did think about whether the play would give me the opportunity to write other movies but not about my own movie so much.

KS: Were you able to support yourself through playwriting before the Pulitzer.

DA: Ah, I was supporting myself; I was supporting myself as a writer before “Proof” but not as a playwright.

KS: What were you writing?

DA: I was writing TV. I was working for, I was writing really junky VH1 TV shows as a freelancer, well I don’t know if that would have lasted, but as soon as “Proof” became a Broadway success, I was sort of set.

KS: You were good.

DA: For that period.

KS: For that period. Because, like the other interviews that I have read with other Pulitzer Prize winners they all say, they all have said that except maybe David Mamet, but also he writes screenplays, that nobody can really live only of playwriting, do you feel the same or do you think you could make a life only of writing plays. Without teaching or movies.

DA: Probably not. Although this old saying, the clicheé is you can make a killing as a playwright but not a living, you know this.

KS: Yeah.

DA: And that’s true. I made enough of “Proof”, I could have done no work for a period of time but at a certain point it runs out.

KS: Okay, it’s (the iphone recording) working great.

DA: Oh good.

KS: I am sorry for checking it at times. Okay. . Did you feel that the Pulitzer Prize even had a great influence in the movie industry? That it was because the play had won the Pulitzer the chances were much higher for it to be turned into a movie.

DA: I really have no idea.

KS: So really no indication of how people have dealt with you or?

DA: Well, I think in general, not in relationship with this movie particularly, it certainly makes you much a more hirable person. I think that movie executives need to protect their jobs essentials. Like if they do something or hire someone and the work that that person does, turns out to be bad or a failure or looses money they have to be able, they have to have an excuse to why they did that and “well, he won the Pulitzer Prize” is a pretty good excuse, so I think that, that becomes a credential that’s valuable. For better or for worse.

KS: So going back to the credibility of the Pulitzer Prize, , obviously it has helped you in terms of recognition, success and it's a great honor but do you artistically question it's credibility viewing that the board, the people who actually decide it in the end are only journalists, have nothing to do with theater. Do feel that artistically that it's like, who has the right to judge theater?

DA: I mean, I actually judge committees who give out awards, it's a human process. You don't know what goes on inside any committee, that's giving out an award. You know you could have been a compromised candidate because one person hated the play and one person loved and someone else, you know, there is no way to judge it, so I think that, I think it's a mistake to assign it too much significance artistically, I think that's.

KS: Do you think that there is a playwright that you know and really like who has been unrecognized so far?

DA: Without saying any names, of course. I mean there are people who have been criminally neglected, there are people who have been over-awarded, I mean that's just.

KS: Could you mention someone who has been neglected, that you can think of?

DA: Oh I don't know. There are major playwrights who should have won it. John Guare seems like an obvious person, who has been overlooked or just had not had the right play in the right year or whatever.

KS: Are you aware that the Pulitzer Prize is only given out to US citizens?

DA: Yes.

KS: . How When you first started adapting your play for the screen, how did you go about. What did you do first? I mean you have written this piece and it was finished and now you had to write it again. What were your first steps? How did you start that?

DA: I….it's a been a long time since I even thought about this….I think, I just really remember plunging in and also taking, very consciously taking an irreverent approach to the play. I thought if a movie was going to be successful I had to completely rethink the material, so I tried to approach in a sort of cavalier way, where I sort of, I took the bones of the story and thought very carefully whether or not there was an other way into it, what

the point of view should be, what the perspective should be, other ways to handle the structure, things like that. I mean, I think I thought of it as a kind of interesting exercise and I enjoy writing the first draft screenplay.

KS: So, then it was rewritten, your screenplay was rewritten again, was it much different to the way that you would have wanted it, in the movie?

DA: Yeah. Well, I take you through the process.

KS: Oh please yes.

DA: The, I view the movie as a not successful film, as an overall thing but I had a lot of offers for the movie and I sold it to this company called Hart-Sharp, that was a small company and I had a good relationship with them and I was going to have a lot of control over it, which was the main thing that was of concern to me. So we went through a long process of where we tried to find a director and we couldn't find one, who could attract the kind of star that they wanted and that I wanted.

KS: Did you have someone in mind?

DA: I had a couple, I mean –

KS: Or did you want to keep Mary Louise Parker?

DA: I really felt that casting was the director's job. I didn't want to get into that whole thing. And it was a big controversial at the time because everyone said no they wont cast Mary Louise in any movie they make 'cause she is too old, she was still in the play at that point and she was furious to hear that as she should have been and all that stuff. So in any case, at a certain point Miramax bought the film from Hart-Sharp, the rights to make the film from Hart-Sharp, which seemed like a good idea at the time, because it made the film have a bigger budget and more cloud to attract the film makers and at that point John Madden and Gwyneth came along and they were the "Shakespeare in Love" Team and I thought that was a good team. John and I did not have a good working relationship at all.

KS: Did you see his play in London, when he put it on in London?

DA: I did and I didn't like it. I mean I liked her but I didn't like the production. And John, even though I think he is a very nice guy, we just, we didn't have a good artistic collaboration. So, I guess what happened at a certain point, I said, look, I don't think there is a way forward for us, I

don't think we agree on what to do, so I think I just need to say "see you later".

KS: "See you later, I keep the movie" or "See you later, you keep the movie"?

DA: Well, I couldn't keep the movie, they had the movie. It was a painful decision but John, I am not sure how to characterize it but I didn't feel, I felt that he was dissatisfied with the work that I had done but wasn't able to articulate what he wanted instead and really didn't have a particular strong vision of what he wanted so, it just became, communication just broke down. So.

KS: So the first contract you actually had with the initial company, where you had a lot of control remaining with you, that was obsolete as soon as Miramax bought the-

DA: Yeah that's right. So then I guess John brought in Rebecca Miller to do some of the things that he wanted done, that I didn't want to do.

KS: Like what?

DA: I think there is like two scenes in the movie, that she wrote. It's been a long time since I've seen it. There are small scenes. But chiefly I think what happened-

KS: The scene in the church, did you decide to do that?

DA: I wrote that.

KS: It's the same in the play, it's just moved –

DA: No, I had moved it into –

KS: the church.

DA: - into the ceremony. There is a scene where she talks to her math professor at North Western.

KS: Yeah.

DA: That's hers. I didn't write that. But I think what really happened, then John and Miramax were, well I know that happened because they called me, they were unhappy with the draft that came out of that process with her, so they called me up and said "we want you to come back to this and go back into the process, we'll pay you a fortune to do it" and I said "I can't do that and work from any material that she worked on. I am not going to

revise someone elses revision of my movie" and John didn't want to do that. So I never came back. And.

KS: Why were you reluctant to do that?

DA: I just, I didn't like any of the work that they had done together and I didn't feel I could work from that, it just seemed like a big mistake, it just seemed it would not have been fruitful to have worked that way. So I think that the final movie - so then John did some tinkering on his own and a lot of what he did was, from my view of the film, was go back to play and just take big chunks of the play an put it back into the movie, so the final film is a kind of weird, I don't think there was ever a shooting script to the film in a way. It is a kind of weird mishmash of my original screenplay, a few small contributions from Rebecca Miller and then chunks of the play that were imported back into the film script, in I think a very awkward way. So, I think in a way, even though, even though the movie is more faithful to the play than my original draft it's actually less affective 'cause long sequences play out simply as performances of the play, which I don't is cinematic and makes it interesting.

KS: So you would have done that differently?

DA: I did do that differently. I mean yeah.

KS: That's very interesting. In terms of like, doing more shifts, like the way you did it with the church, the way you put half of that into the church, you would have done more of that, like putting the same kinds of dialogs but in different locations.

DA: --- I mean I did do a fair bit of that but a lot of it was the flash back sequence and how that worked. I thought that one of the things we really lost track of in the movie, whether they shot it or not, I don't know, was, and one of things I thought made the movie confusing, was that the idea she had, there had been a summer of clarity for the guy that was a concrete point in time and that was the summer that she decided to go back to school. A summer, when he could have perhaps written the proof. I thought that got lost, so that all that material in the play when she meets Hall for the first time, which is a flashback in the play, didn't quite make it into the movie in a coherent way, I thought so.

KS: , did you feel that something worked better in the movie than it did on stage.

DA: Well I don't think it's a terrible movie and I don't think there, I like Hope Davis and I like Gwyneth and I like Anthony Hoppkins to an extent, I don't think he makes sense as an American dad, I don't know what he is doing there but I like his performance but no, I don't think, I certainly think it's much stronger as a stage play and I am not sure that is entirely John Maddan's fault. I mean it was designed as a piece of theater and I am not sure it makes sense to expect that, that material would work equally well in the movies. I think that in general when movies, when plays are adapted into movies often the best thing that can be said for the film has ensembled a cast that could have never been ensembled for a theater production and that's often why it is exciting to go back and watch like, I don't think the movie version of "Who is afraid of Virginia Wolfe?" is better than the play but it's sort of fun to see -

KS: - those two.

DA: - those two. Or streetcar. the movie of the streetcar is probably the best adaptation of a great play in that it preserves that, it preserves those performances, particularly Brando's performance in a way we'd all be poor to not have the record of it but is it a great movie as a movie. No, it's a great filmed play. So.

KS: It's funny because, to be honest with you, I saw "Proof" way before I knew it was a play. I saw it right when it came out, I was still a teenager at the time and I thought I liked it then. I do agree with but it's funny because I believe you also look at material differently when you know it was a play.

DA: Yeah. Again, I don't think the movie is a disgrace or a terrible movie by any means but it is certainly not the movie that I would have liked to have been made.

KS: Did you, when it was starting, did you expect that the critics would be harsh on the movie, because they were so kind, well they loved obviously the play, did you expect them to love the movie as well?

DA: I didn't really have any expectations. Since I had such sour feelings about the movie at that point. I didn't really care that much how it was reviewed. So, I didn't expect anything either way.

KS: I understand. If you, that's kind of like a question, do you feel like when certain stories come in your head, do you automatically know this is going to be a movie, this is going to be a play or do you make a conscious choice?

DA: Automatically.

KS: Automatically. So with "Proof", if you would have for some reason decided for it to become a movie it would have become a completely different way?

DA: It would not have happened. I mean I had a very clear image in my mind, a stage picture when I started writing the play, was a play from the word go.

KS: So, more on your creative process, so you know automatically whether it is a play or a screenplay and then what? What's the first thing you do when an idea pops in your head?

DA: You, I mean, it varies, in general the first thing I do is try to write down the idea in any form that I can and to take some notes on it and work it out a bit in prose and then if I feel that I have a few ideas that seem interesting to me, I try to turn it into dialogue. And see if I can start getting the dialogue to sort of roll forward a little bit, if I start to find some bones of characters who seem to be speaking in an interesting way and if that happens then the process just becomes a working out of the premise through dialogue as much as you can and then when you get stuck, I often will go back and think it out again, think it out loud again as if it were on the page. Explain to myself what I am doing, what the story is, what the characters are doing and then take an other crack at it, it is sort of a like, you just sort of try putting ingredients in the pot and keep stirring until it starts turning into something that tastes good in a way. Or throw it out.

KS: And who is the first person who reads anything?

DA: Ah, my wife. but I have, there are two or three people who I show new work to, who I trust.

KS: How much have you written since "Proof" that has never seen the light of day?

DA: I have written like a play, a whole play that I never had produced, that I had a bunch of readings of and felt like it wasn't working. So I didn't

move it into production and then I wrote another half a play. Now I am sort of most of the way through another play, so those are things that haven't been seen. Ah but I've written, things that have been seen, a lot of screenplays and one-acts and things like that.

KS: Because on imdb it says you are working on three different movies right now.

DA: It does? What does it say?

KS: , it seemed, all just from the title, almost science fiction.

DA: Oh the Archive.

KS: It says "St. George and the Dragon", "Warrior Queen" and "The Archive".

DA: Well "St. George" and the "Warrior Queen" are both projects I did four, five years ago that never got made. "The archive" is something that's in, I am still writing that, it's a big studio movie.

KS: Oh, wow that's awesome. So like with like "The girl in the park" that was all you.

DA: That was all me. I wrote the screenplay as so I could direct it and we kind of financed it into kind of like…

KS: What is the first movie you ever directed?

DA: Oh yeah.

KS: Have you done short films or anything beforehand?

DA: Nope.

KS: Have you directed anything other than staged readings?

DA: I directed plays but I have never directed a movie.

KS: So how was that process for you?

DA: Fucking great.

KS: Yeah.

DA: It was the most interesting, most exhilarating thing I've ever done.

KS: So do you want to continue directing your writing? Or other people's writing.

DA: I mean, yeah you know, I managed in the last couple year to direct my own movie, other people's plays, my own plays. I've never directed anyone else film script but that is something I'd like to do. All of the combinations feel good to me.

KS: And you said in an interview with film catcher that you tried to utilize the camera as much as possible, like what's for you when putting on a film in contrast to a play, what do you feel the camera should show, that you can't actually see on a stage? What do you want the camera to show in a movie?

DA: It is not so much that you want the camera, it is not so much that the movie can do things that the play can't do, although it can of course. It is that, it's that you have to find a way, the story is told primarily visually and not primarily through dialog so that, I think, there are exceptions to that obviously. You should be able to make minimal use of dialog and still tell the story and if you don't have a visual sense of the shot, at least some of the shots and the camera moves that will tell the story that you are trying to tell in that scene then there might be something wrong with the conception of it. So, yeah to the extent that I understand the difference, I think that's part of it.

KS: So you feel, to make it really short, the difference between movies and theater is kind of telling and showing a little bit or?

DA: It's not so easy to say that because they are both about action and they are both about characters doing things. That is the heart of any drama, right? So, movies, I don't know, there are no rules, there are no clear, bright boundaries between the two mediums. I do think that, I mean I could give you a lot of specific examples of things I thought were very, very different. Like, Movies seem to be a lot less tolerant, movies seem to be able to communicate ideas faster than a play, so that, minor characters in the movie for example, which from my playwriting experiences I would have felt I needed to set up in order to pay off for their narrative purpose. You have a scene with this character here, establishes it the character in the audiences mind, so that later when you meet them and they do the thing they are really there do to do you understand who they are and so forth. Movies seem to work differently; you don't need to, I mean you don't need to establish a character in the same way. A glimpse, one shot, a look can establish the person in a way that is completely sufficient for the audience's needs. Lessons like that I learned a lot, mostly in editing, because you have material that you find completely surplus that was

intended to help the audience and they were already there, ahead of you, you didn't need it. So things like that, I think movies can do more quickly or more efficiently sometimes. But there are no rules.

KS: Im film making you have been mostly self-taught beside the whole fellowship you did in Los Angeles, is that right?

DA: Entirely self-taught. I mean not self, but taught by the people I was working with, I mean, I was taught on "Girl in the park" by my DP.

KS: Two questions: Do you think, just to quickly back to theater and how it relates to the movie industry, do you feel that, , theater needs, a lot of theater needs the movies to survive because film and TV employ a lot of writers, who couldn't really live of play writing, so that they have to write for film or TV. That's what my research has sort of been showing a little bit. I always, I always thought, that they were competing and now I feel – do you think they are keeping each other alive, or?

DA: Yeah, I mean, you know, to an extent certainly financially they are and that is not just true for writers, it's also true for actors. No one has done more for the New York theater than the creator of "Law & Order", I mean more New York actors are able to survive because of that TV-show than any foundation or any other, you know, financial intervention, it is not a trivial thing, it's huge. I mean, you know, I think there will always been theater, technology is really not a big factor in the survival of the theater. I think people will always put on plays and they always will and, I don't really - he circumstances of it might change but yeah a lot of good writers are able to keep writing plays because they have TV and movie work.

KS: Do you feel the plays become obsolete once they are turned into movies, do you feel like there is less interest in the play?

DA: I haven't seen any of it in the case of "Proof", no I haven't seen any of it. I mean it's had a very healthy life, as healthy of a life before the movie and after.

KS: When I look at your work and I think I have read most of the available stuff, you seem to have very strong female characters, stronger than the male characters, at least in my feeling, I have not read the "journals of Mihal Sebastian" because it hasn't arrived at my house yet, so I have only read a couple of pages online. So other than that, I feel, when I think of

your work, the women come into mind first. Do you decide that consciously or why does that happen?

DA: I think just I don't know why actually. I wrote a play last year that was two men and I felt it was of the the best, a one act, one of the strongest things I've written.

KS: What was it called?

DA: An Upset. It was produced at ESP.

KS: It's not available yet.

DA: No, it hasn't been published, I could give it to you, if you want to.

KS: Yes, I would love to, I was going to ask.

DA: So, I just, it just has been the case so far that the stories hat prominent women characters in them.

KS: That was no conscious choice.

DA: I mean I don't know why Catherine and Claire were women. I just remember thinking they are sisters, they're just sisters.

KS: Do you like Claire or did you like Claire?

DA: As a character?

KS: Yes.

DA: Oh I love her.

KS: Yeah?

DA: Yeah.

KS: 'Cause I was never sure, cause I just, obviously recently seen the movie again and I felt like she was made in the movie made much less, she so much more dizzy than Catherine that it was kind of you liked one or the other and it felt in the play, I haven't seen the Broadway production, because it was so many years ago for me, do you feel like in the movie she was turned more into a dizzy person than you wanted to?

DA: The balance was a little bit of in the movie but I didn't think Hope Davis was wrong for it. I do think when I've seen productions of the play gone bad, it almost always is because Claire is wrong, because Claire is played as too harsh or a kind of comic villain and when I have seen productions of the play gone right I see Claire is entirely sympathetic, well meaning person, who is never the less just exasperated and forwarded by this sister of her. And Claire is annoying to Catherine and she may be

annoying to us at times but she means well and there is a range of, there is room within the world to make her a slightly more or slightly less annoying but if she becomes a villain then the production sucks essentially.

KS: To go back to “The Girl in the Park”, I really, really loved that movie, it was really fantastic.

DA: Oh thanks.

KS: Just the idea of family and how that can work, I was able to relate to very well. And something that I thought and wondered if it was in a way a little bit of a political choice that the mother was a really old mother, did you think about that when you were having Sigourney Weaver play the main character?

DA: That Sigourney is old?

KS: I mean she was for a mother of a three year old.

DA: Yeah that’s right, I mean that was a tough thing, I mean since she was going to be her real age for the, most of the movie, we had to, it seemed to make more sense to pick an actress and age her down a little bit without pushing it to a ridiculous extent, so yeah I think it was kind of inevitable that she was going to be an older Mom, have started a family late for whatever reason. , it might have been possible in the movie with a different kind of budget to do some super CGI, I don’t know what you would have done…

KS: I kind of thought it was a good political statement because now women in their 40s do have children, so..

DA: I know exactly. Especially in New York, I kind of buy the “she started late” and she had kids at near 40 and that’s the way it was.

KS: Okay that’s what I thought. I am so sorry, now I just got to look –

DA: No, no, go to the prop.

KS: , now that you are not a starving playwright anymore or a starving screenwriter anymore, do you still prefer New York over LA or do you think if you go more and more into movies, you might relocate?

DA: No, I love New York, I don’t want to live in LA, no desire. Where do you want to end up?

KS: In the world?

DA: Yeah.

KS: I would always want to be fluid. The Upper-west-side is one of my favorite parts in the world.

DA: You live here?

KS: My aunt lives on 76th street.

DA: Oh great, okay.

KS: So as a kid I would always spend my summers on the upper west side, I didn't realize how expensive it actually was and once I moved here and had to pay for my own room, I was like "what, closet?", It was a different experience. I love both. I lived in LA in the beginning of the year and I thought it was fantastic. I think they are both great. But I have always lived between Europe and America and always had to live with the dual identity, I guess but they are great places.

How dealing with , you were talking about artistic control in that one interview and we have been sort of talking about it. How was dealing with producers as you were doing your movies and also as you were adapting "Il Mare" for "The Lake House" and how have you experienced that relationship writer – producer?

DA: I generally had good relationships with producers; I mean those were two very different experiences. When you are working for the big studios, you really are in the position of, you know, a contractor, who is called in to work on a house and you know, they want someone to put a roof on their house and it has to be a good roof, they don't want it to leak but, but, it is not your house, so, so that's if you go into those jobs with that set of expectations, there is a limit to affronted you can become. With my own movie I had incredibly terrific and supportive producers, the limitations you went up against, the checks on your artistic vision you know are financial and time and all that stuff but that's, that can also enclose mutual discipline.

KS: I mean 26 days was the time you had.

DA: 26/27, yeah.

KS: Fantastic.

DA: Yeah, I can't believe we got it all done.

KS: And it was great, I really, really liked it. What was the inspiration for it?

DA: Just wanting to do something about; a mother – daughter story but with a twist, something wrong with it, a kink or twist, I think that's what it was.

KS: No, that was really nice. Do you think you could ever imagine starting a TV show?

DA: *nods.*

KS: Yeah, have you had any concrete ideas? Because it's supposed to be more a writers medium than film.

DA: yeah. No, I have been. It's something I have thought a lot about because there is so much wonderful stuff on TV.

KS: Do you associate a lot with other writers?

DA: Yeah, I do. I mean I'm in the writers guild and we have meetings and all that stuff and I have close friends who are writers.

KS: Do you read their work sometimes? Or is it one of these no-gos, you do not read somebody's work before it's published?

DA: I mean I do, I am not, a lot of writers are in writers groups with one another and they are sort of work shopping their plays together, I don't do that. But with close friends, I do with their work.

KS: One question that I thought of and it is a bit of a personal question and I hope you forgive me – you were writing "Proof" before you had a child is that right?

DA: Sure.

KS: Now that you are a father, do you think your view on the father daughter relationship has changed and you would write it differently today or have your thoughts changed a little bit?

DA: I have thought about it. No, they haven't. I mean it's strange. I have two daughters. And I didn't when I wrote the play. And I don't think I would have written it differently.

KS: Interesting that you got two daughters.

DA: It is strange.

KS: It works. It's all about women.

DA: And their names are Catherine and Claire, it's so –

KS: you're kidding.

DA: Yes. That would be scary. You would be like "check, please."

KS: Have you had anything to do with any of the Casting decisions in any of your plays and stuff? Were you ever involved in the process?

DA: Oh yeah completely involved.

KS: Oh cool. In movies and?

DA: The studio movies, no.

KS: This one (pointing to "The Gril in the Park") yes?

DA: This one absolutely. I mean, I cast all the parts and whenever I had new work done, I review all the Casting and the director. I mean that's why you want to work in the theater because you have that control.

KS: In the theater is it actually you having more control than the director?

DA: , it's all a negotiation but the culture of the theater is such, the tradition is that it's your vision that they are trying to realize and that contractually is what's reflected in the fact that you have casting approval, you have approval over the director, you have the right even, although it's very rarely used, you have the right to not allow a show to open to the press if you are not happy with it. I mean if you did that, it's all scandal and problem but you could do that.

KS: You could do that on purpose.

DA: You could do it on purpose. And people have done. So when I have worked with Dan Sullivan, who directed "Proof", who was and is an acclaimed, experienced director, he has been in the business for 40 years or whatever, it would have been entirely natural for him to treat me like the total novice I was but because he respects, I think the respects me, but he respects really the tradition of what the relationship between a playwright and director is, he treated me as an equal partner and that's something I really valued and I would expect that from any director.

KS: Do you feel when comparing theater and movies it's, , in theater the critics have so much to say on whether a play lives or dies and in the movies it's the public but also like the commerce and how commercial it is, how does that affect your work?

DA: Ah, I don't know. It's a tough. I mean you kind of have to ignore the critics to the extend that you can, I think and sort of just muddle through and hope that you get enough good notices over the course of your life in any medium that your career can kind of continue, I don't know.

KS: Next week I am interviewing Chris Boneau from Boneau/Bryan-Brown.

DA: Oh yeah.

KS: How was your relationship with them? How was the work? How did that relate?

DA: I, he was a publicist for the film, right?

KS: Yeah, no he was the publicist for the play.

DA: For the play. Well that shows you what the relationship was like. No, I remember Chris as a really good guy. I don't think I worked that closely with him but, yeah.

KS: Would you know what he did for the play or what his work was?

DA: Boneau/Bryan-Brown, well they must have done publicity, well I remember there was a lot of publicity, so I guess he did a good job.

KS: Well, you know I am just trying to like put the pieces together, how –

DA: Don't tell him I said that but

KS: No, but I'll say you said he was a really nice guy, so that's great. So, , do you really feel, do you feel that some stories can work both on stage an on screen or you feel it is always either, or.

DA: No, I don't think it's either or but the ones who tend to work the best are the ones that get turned inside out to an extent, I mean I think the movie version of the play "Dangerous liaisons" which is of course in itself an adaptation of a epistolar novel is a good example of that, it is completely restructured in every way. And very successful, I think.

KS: And it has been adapted many times.

DA: Many times.

KS: That's also for sure. What are your influences in writing? Who influenced you a lot?

DA: , I was, I mean there people who excited me and made me want to write plays without actually influencing the way I write plays I think but John Guerre and Tom Stoppard are probably.

KS: Which, by the way, I read "Arcadia" because it was mentioned so many times with "Proof" and I, except "Monkey on a typewriter" (a line from both of the plays) there was no other –

DA: Plays about, with science in them, I think is all they have in common.

KS: Yeah. 'Cause I was like "I am going to read this to know" but – I mean it was a great play too but completely from what it had to say. what happened to Myra Lennox.

DA: That – ah you mean the movie?

KS: Yeah. 'cause you were writing it when a lot of people interviewed.

DA: Yeah it was just an impossible, I would have liked to have made it, it was an impossible movie to finance, it was a pretty big movie set in the depression, it was just too expensive.

KS: But maybe in the future?

DA: Yeah, I'd love to make it.

KS: Things, like themes that do reoccur in your work, whether you choose or like with "Lake House" you didn't choose it was going to be an architect, it was already in "Il Mare" but it did sort of come again in like "Skyscraper" had architecture and "Lake house" had architecture and math comes up in little bits and pieces again and brilliant fathers and strong females and Chicago keeps coming up. Are you aware of these topics coming up again, or?

DA: To an extent, well, Chicago, they needed a setting for "The Lake House" and I knew Chicago, knew it better than lets say San Francisco or some other city by the water, so it seems logical. You know I mean "parents and children" seems like the theme I am drawn to and find releases some artistic energy in me, so I am conscious about it very much.

KS: So would you say, your father being an English professor influenced you a lot, like –

DA: Yeah, absolutely, my Dad's interest and his passion for literature and theater was formative for sure.

KS: Did you base any on him in a way.

DA: Not really, I mean I am sure that there are elements of him but not consciously, certainly.

KS: Okay, if you couldn't be writing what would be your other job, if you couldn't make films and write what else would you do?

DA: I would probably want to work in politics.

KS: Right, 'cause you almost did.

DA: Yeah.

KS: Yea, I read that. Politics, which side?

DA: Well, it's, even though I am just mortified to associate myself as a democrat these days, it would have to be that sadly, I would be due for a life of frustration.

KS: Okay, , I think I have pretty much – oh were do you think you can take greater risks, always theater or film – artistic risks?

DA: Ha – I don't know. I mean probably in the theater, there are fewer, you know you can always get a play produced even if you are doing it in your basement; you can always get a play produced.

KS: Even though the critics would be so – well, obviously every critic would go and see your play, are you not worried about at all? Especially after "Proof" being this huge success?

DA: I mean, I would be lying if I said I wouldn't be worried about it at all, no one likes to be attacked or badly reviewed but I am worried about it a lot less than I am not working, so

KS: Are you planning on having another big Broadway show happening?

DA: Well, you know, I have a new play that's in the works and I don't feel strongly about where it's done as long as it's done with the right cast and director, I really I don't care, I mean obviously it's exciting to be on Broadway but that's not my primary concern.

KS: Cool, okay, as you write a screenplay and as you write a play, what is the greatest difference in the working process of the two?

DA: Well, screenplays are written on assignment, almost, at least most of the screenplay work I do –

KS: "The girl in the park"

DA: Not "The girl the in park" that is different. But other stuff I've been hired to do, so you're working under some constraints and expectations and deadlines and you don't have when you are doing your own work. And that's both good and bad, I mean it can be very useful to have a deadline and you got to show up for work.

KS: And in the way, with plays the scenes are obviously longer and more dialogue driven, is that difficult for you to switch back and forth, I mean screenplays - shorter scenes, less dialogue, plays – longer scenes, more dialogue?

DA: No, it's not. I mean, it's like swimming in a pool vs. swimming in the ocean. I mean it's not harder swimming in the ocean after you can swim in the pool, it is just a different, you just do different things.

KS: The waves do make it more –

DA: You are saying it is harder?

KS: In the ocean, sure.

DA: You don't like my analogy?

KS: No, I am sorry.

DA: I just came up with it, give me a break.

KS: I am horrible, I am sory.

DA: Give me some time I'll work on another one.

KS: It is a lot harder to swim in an ocean.

DA: It's calm sea, you see.

KS: You've lived in Chicago, you are thinking about your great lakes.

DA: The lake, the lake.

KS: I'll take the lake analogy, that works.

DA: By all means.

KS: Okay, I think for the most part, I have –

DA: Okay, great.

END OF INTERVIEW.

Interview mit Chris Boneau vom 27. Januar 2010 - geführt und transkribiert von Katharina Sporrer

Katharina Sporrer: So my first introductory question is could you outline the process of your work, like from the first moment you hear about the piece until it opens?

Chris Boneau: Right, ahm, so I am a press rep, so I am hired by the show as soon as there is a even glimmer of a thought that the show is going to happen. Ahm. When it is with a non-profit organization, where a lot of plays originate, ahm, I know about it about it at least a season in advance, ahm, in this season where I am doing a lot of limited run engagement plays, either transfers from London, transfers from off-Broadway (sorry, coffee comes)

CB: Are you sure you don't want any coffee or tea?

KS: No, thank you, the water was great.

CB: So the answer to the question is as soon as possible, ahm, plays particularly, if we are talking about plays primarily?

KS: Yeah.

CB: Plays take a lot of nurturing and because they are not, Broadway is considered, musicals make up Broadway really, let's just get down to it and the Tony awards are about musicals and the public thinks of Broadway as musicals, they come to see musicals on Broadway, so to get started to work on a play, if you don't have a star and you don't have a star title, ahm, then you have a lot of work cut out for yourself. Just two quick comparisons: I am doing "A View on the Bridge" right now, which just opened with Liev Schreiber and Scarlett Johannson too - amazing reviews, that was an easy one in some ways, because you had movie star, you had a person making their Broadway debut, a big movie star and the "is she going to be any good"-buzz and she is and she proved that, at the same time I am working on play called "Next Fall", which is a transfer from off-Broadway with six actors you have never heard of or you maybe you recognize from a TV show but you don't know them, it is probably a contender for the Pulitzer if it all goes well, ahm, it got great buzz last year off-Broadway but its advance sales is in the num- are in the tiny, tiny, tiny

numbers so it will all about getting people to see it or people who have seen it becoming ambassadors for the show, so to go back to your question, it's every show is different, some shows you find out literally three weeks or four weeks before they go on sale and start performances, some shows I have known about for a year or longer – "Fences" I am working on, I have known, it's going to happen, for a year but I can't really do anything until we start getting ready to go on sale because we can't announce certain things, it's not real until it's real. With a musical you start so much earlier, by reviewing numbers and musical things and set designs and stuff – plays, you hit the ground running.

KS: Who approaches you, the theater or specific producers?

CB: Specific Producers. Every show that is produced, is produced by a producing team and usually I am hired by the general manager who is the day to day producer. Ahm, I have a lot of producers who are loyal to me so they'll use me on every show, if they can. And a lot of teams are kind of incestuous, so that people who work together tend to work together a lot. This year we are all working on a lot of shows together and separately, so there are times that I have to remember "oh right, I am working on that show and I can't talk about that thing" and I never reveal strategies for other shows, so it's sort of you know and I think of myself as more of a political stra – oh ah political - a press strategist, I do think of it as political in some ways, it's almost like running a campaign for a candidate, you figure out what the strengths are and where the potential weaknesses are and you get everything in place so that you know going in what's going to work and what is not going to work. And like for example for "View from the Bridge" I knew that Scarlet Johansson was a tremendous asset but I also know she might be a liability if she wasn't any good, so when Sunday night came along and we got the review, looks like also well this asset is no longer a liability, she is an asset, now a liability is that we have to close on April 4th and because she got to do a movie junket and the theater is promised to someone else so what I wanted to happen is for the show to run longer and that's a strange thing, normally plays run a limited engagement and with the rare exception of say "God of Carnage", "39 steps", plays don't run any longer than they are meant to run, meaning

they run a season, a limited season if it's a movie star, so ahm, it's an interesting year for us because it will mean, you don't, you never want to say "limited engagement" unless you really are limited engagement unless somebody has to be somewhere or the theater is promised, this case the theater is promised, someone has to be there and we want to be not limited engagement, so

KS: But you are in the position where you can pick and choose your work, is that right?

CB: Yeah, I mean I am still a business, so I have to be careful; I mean there are some projects I would have, last year, that I would have probably said no to, last year but business is cyclical and when you are faced with the kind of American economy we were in last year still and still suffering from this year, we rarely turn anything down if there is merit, I mean we don't turn things down cavalierly but we don't know the people and we think it's a project that has no chance of survival, chances we are too busy. But if it is somebody we know, say it's somebody we have worked with who says "we are all doing this because certain playwright is involved and they want etc. etc. etc.", we'll do it knowing that it might not be easy. Like on "Next Fall" for example, I don't know how long it will run and I doubt that I will make any money off of it, meaning that it wont run a very long, long time, I mean that's just conjectural on my part, I don't know what will happen.

KS: Do you make a certain percentage of -?

CB: No, I make a weekly salary, so the show needs to run for me to make money, I get paid every week.

KS: I see.

CB: But if I went back and looked at all the shows I took on, thinking they would run that closed after three weeks, after four weeks, ahm, I would be shocked and the things that I didn't expect to run, that ran a long time, I mean it's – ahm, we don't make a percentage, we only make money if the show runs.

KS: In an interview with lyingonthebeach.com you said that 80% of Broadway shows don't make their money back, so my question is who

makes the money and who looses when it goes down? How does that work?

CB: Well I mean, it's a business first of all, so there are a lot of people like me, when you go to a „meet and greet" of a first Broadway show you end up seeing about a hundred people, ahm, who are involved with the show in some way or the other, the cast, the crew, the production team, the casting people, the advertising agency, the marketing, the press people, ah – you name it, all these vendors, who are hired to work on the show. So everybody is getting a weekly fee to work on the show, it's just like any job, some people are journeymen, they go from project to project to project, I mean I would consider myself in some ways a journeymen who goes from show to show to show, it just happens that we have a lot of them at any given time but the people here in the office are working on somewhere between two or three things at a time, ahm, so there are fees that get paid during the run of the show, the producer may get a producing fee to be on the producing team, the general manager gets a fee to run the show but the people who invested, who have really, the ones who put their money on the line, most likely aren't get their money back.

KS: And those are just rich, random people or who are they?

CB: They are random people and they often are rich, yes, ahm, I don't know that all of them are always rich but they tend to invest their money, their disposable income in a different way, so rather than playing the stock market or, ahm, playing the horses or doing ponzi schemes, they probably, they probably enjoy, they love the theater and to them going to the opening party and meeting a celebrity and being able to say to their friends to and to be able to say to their family or to their associates, that they have invested in a Broadway – my doctor, my medical doctor is an investor in "A View from the Bridge" and when I first saw him, and he first told me about two months ago, ticket sales were okay on a "A View from the Bridge" but we started out of the gate slower than we would have thought and he told me he was doing it and I was like "oh, okay" and I thought "gosh, now I got the pressure of making my doctor successful on this" and then I saw him the other day and I saw him on the opening night and I said "you picked a winner." And he, and I also know he picked a

winner but we helped make it a winner. I think next to producing a really great show, one has to market the show correctly and you can't do one without the other. A great marketing campaign for a show that's not any good is worthless and a show that's really good but that's badly market is also, it's terrible, so I can't think of any instances, I know that they where; I know there were times when my marketing plan or my press plan has been better than the show and that's frustrating, ahm, because it doesn't live up to it because at the end of the day what keeps a show open is word of mouth, that people like it.

KS: Ahm, do you think that there are any theaters, any actual productions that could survive, finance themselves solely of ticket sales?

CB: Ahm…

KS: Is that still possible?

CB: Well they kind of have to, in some ways, I mean there is, there is no government funding for the for-profits. I mean, the not-for profits, I think, I think that's a good question for the not-for profits, the not-for profits are, can't on ticket sales alone, I don't even know what the percentages of their budgets would be, ahm, for the institutional theaters like Manhattan Theater club and Lincoln Center and Atlantic and Round-about, I am not even sure what their percentages are right now, ahm, they only really make money or the production becomes successful or they reach their goal if they do what say "Ruined" did last year off-Broadway, where it ran beyond it's subscription time and ran through the summer and was really selling single tickets and they were making, they were able to charge full prize rather than a subscription prize, ahm, there are no subsidies for any commercial ventures, so ahm, if you get a sponsorship or you get someone to like pay for your opening night party or something. (reacting to a sound) Sorry the dog is eating something, the dog ate my homework!

KS: (laugther)

CB: They ahm, they have to live of, I mean it's a terrible analogy but it's true, the theatre, ahm, on a Monday or a Tuesday is like a head of lettuce at the grocery store and lettuce is lettuce and it's a nice crisp, green ball of lettuce on a Tuesday but as the week goes on, if nobody buys it, by the end of the week, you know what happens to head of lettuce if it starts to

go bad, and if noone has bought it, at the end of the week on a Sunday chances are on the Tuesday morning the producer is going to have to make hard decision and close the show. Now there are a number of factors that come into that, if they don't have a reserve, meaning "A View from the Bridge" is not going to close on Sunday, because it had a - if a snow storm suddenly happened today or tomorrow, it wouldn't wipe out "A View from the Bridge" but it could certainly wipe out a couple of smaller things that are playing week by week, that are playing to tourists, that are playing to, ahm, people, who come in for the weekend, like, ahm, like if we had a terrible snow storm this weekend and, ahm, people didn't come in from out of town, a couple of shows would suffer very, very, very badly, So winters are very tough in New York for theater goers. So if you have a strong reserve or if you have a strong advance, ahm, which is why, ah, "Rag Time" and the, ah, Neil Simon play "Brighton Beach memoirs" did not run, it didn't have a strong enough advance to whether some tough weeks, so you know there is a whole mathematical thing that sort tells you how that all can work. But if shows have loosing weeks, week after week after week, someone smart is going to say we can't loose this much money every week, so if you are making money or you are putting a little money aside every week or if you are breaking even, chances are, and if you look ahead and think we're building, or we are about to go into a heavy tourist season where this show is going to be successful but say you are a show that opens do mediocre reviews in November and you think "okay, we'll go through December when the Christmas holidays are here and the tourists are in town but then you get to January and February where we call you know getting to the cliff times, where shows are on the cliff, where if you have not build a reserve and shown that you're a show that's going to do, be successful, they either swallow the - and loose the money, people pump more money in, sometimes for no good reason or they close, which is why you see a batch of closing the first weeks of January or right before Christmas because if the look at and they say "you know what, we could run Christmas but we are just going to break even, we might as well close now, get out, stop paying rent, return some of the money to our investors and get out." There is nothing more heart breaking than hearing a show

hasn't recouped but the fact that they have lost even more money, I mean on "Brigthon Beach" even by extending a week the way they did, running that week they should not have run, they lost you know an other couple hundred thousand dollars.

KS; Wow.

CB: And it's not silly money, I mean it's big money.

KS: Yeah, wow.

CB: Ahm, there is there was talk of, like right now on "A View from the Bridge", we are in this happy dilemma, of knowing that we are probably going to sell thie run out through April 4th, to move the theater, to move the show to an other theater would cost somewhere around 500 000 Dollars to move to an other theater and take the cast, the set and set up, do all the changes to the marquies, to do all the marketing materials and change them, that's a lot of time and work for an other 10 week run, let's just say 10 weeks, so that means you have to make an extra 50 000 Dollars each week just to break even from that move, ahm, that's not easy to do, to do 50 000 on top of what you are already doing, ahm, a producer has to think, if I close it on April 4th chances are I am going to have recouped my money and I can pay my investors back and the next time I have a bright idea for a show I go back to my doctor and other people and they invest but if we, out of vanity, say we have to keep this thing running because we might win a Tony award. So the conversations we are having right now is, is it prudent to close or do we try to move it and if so, can we make all the various pieces work financially, logistically, I mean does Scarlet Johansson want to come back? Does? So there are a lot of variables, always a lot of variables.

KS: Ahm so, how, you have been mentioning the Tony Award twice already but in my thesis I am going to, I am working on the Pulitzer Prize, so I am wondering, I am happy you mentioned the Tony twice and not the Pulitzer, it kind of –

CB: Yeah, good

KS: - gives me an impression already a little bit, but how would you describe the significance of the Pulitzer in the Theater world and compared to the Tony?

CB: The Pulitzer is more of a – it's a sophisticated award, ahm, it plays, it doesn't really sell a ticket. Ahm.

KS: It doesn't?

CB: The Pulitzer doesn't ever really sell a ticket, I mean, on its own, if a play is running and it has got good reviews, and, the fact that it's the Pulitzer Prize here doesn't get a lot of press, used to, it's a very prestigious award, it's a playwrights award, so it goes into the mix of things that a New York sophisticated Tri-state area theater going audience, which is always the first people we go to in the very beginning to sell a ticket, they are going to respond to Pulitzer Prize very early, the nice thing about it that's two months before the Tony Awards, so you get a head start on all the awards, and it's, I think next to the Tony, it's probably the most significant award a play can be honored with.

KS: But you feel that the Tony actually bears greater–

CB: The Tony sells a ticket; the Pulitzer really doesn't, unless, unless something has happened, like I worked on a play called "Topdog/Underdog" which won the Pulitzer the day after it opened and it opened to great reviews and the next day we found out it won the Pulitzer so the combination of that news was incredible because we gathered the cast and everyone took a picture and suddenly the play that just opened to great reviews won the Pulitzer Prize and it was gigantic, same thing happened with "Doubt", where "Doubt" was already a word of mouth hit, it was already a critics darling and it won the Pulitzer Prize and it pushed it right over the top because people thought, "well a four character 90 minute play, a lot of my friends are talking about it but it must be really good if it won the Pulitzer and it set it up beautifully for the Tony Awards. Ahm, in terms of which one is more important: ahm.the Tony. Because the Tony is a marketing – think about the difference. The Pulitzer is a small, not small, it's a prestigious award, which carries a financial award for the playwright, it's a great thing for someone to market and it's a great thing to be proud of, it's a great thing to add to your marketing materials. The Tony awards themselves is just an excuse to market Broadway, I mean it is lovely to win Tony awards, I mean I've, our shows have won a lot of them and it is a lovely feeling winning the Tony award and when your show wins a Tony,

chances are it will run a little bit longer than you expected it to run and ahm, but the Tony awards are a platform for promoting Broadway, the Pulitzer has no way to do that. So the Pulitzer is more of a, it is something that a playwright I think is frankly more thrilled to have won a Pulitzer because there is no formal competition, there is no formal nomination procedure, it's all done through an advisory panel and it's all done sort of in secret, it's still a very old fashioned, ahm, although, you know, we hear things, I have a couple of shows that I am working on, that are apparently on the short list but nobody can or will confirm it and it's still very early on. You don't really find out if your show was a finalist until they announce the winner.

KS: Right. Can you guess sometimes as the season goes on?

CB: Yeah.

KS: I mean over the years, do you feel like, okay –

CB: Yeah, I, my, I have worked on shows that have won six Pulitzers and about in about 12, in about 10 years. So I have had, I am the Pulitzer guy, you know, which is kind of, you have picked the right guy to talk to –

KS: I know.

CB: No, I mean, I love that Monday that the Pulitzer are announced at 3 o'clock because I have it down to a science on what to do, I also know whether it's a year I am going to be busy or not, I have had one year, where I knew two plays out of the three, I knew, I knew that my office represented two plays were potential finalists and I had it confirmed on good authority that we were on the short list and that was a year they have decided not to give an award to a playwright.

KS: Oh God.

CB: So not only did I have to call the two playwrights to say where will you be at 3 o'clock because we have a whole system in place, where we roll phone calls and we have the *New York Times* standing by to talk to them and everybody is sort of ready to do press and take a picture and all those things. I had to call both playwrights and had to say, not only did you not win but they chose not to give an award. I think they would have felt better had the other person won than to think no play was worthy of an award

that year. And their frustration was, was not that they didn't win but that the committee felt that there was no play-

KS: The board felt-

CB: The board felt.

KS: The committee, yeah.

CB: Yeah.

KS: And don't you feel that is insulting,

CB: Yeah, absolutely

KS: viewing that the board is only journalists and a couple academics.

CB: Absolutely and it has happened more than once over the last couple of years. I mean this year. I mean, the, last year when "Ruined" won it was one of the first plays in a long time that had just been on, ah, playing off-Broadway. "Dinner with friends" was off-Broadway and "Wit" was off-Broadway but ahm most of the time it's a Broadway play, most of the time it's a play that is currently running, ahm, but yeah I mean the thing about the Pulitzer is that there is tremendous, it's one of the days where I personally want to be the one to make the phone call because there is nothing better than to say or saying to a playwright "You have been awarded the Pulitzer Prize", I mean you don't really win it, you are awarded it. You don't get nominated for it, ahm and when I make that phone call, a week or so ahead of time and to say "Look, ahm, where might you be on Monday at 3 o'clock? You think you might find yourself in mid-town, near my office, if I needed you?" Now, some playwright are pretty caggy, they are pretty smart "oh that's Pulitzer day, you mean, you want me to be around, in case something happens, sure, where do you want me to be?" other playwrights are like "what are you talking about? Oh my God, don't talk to me about this and, ahm, so I have literally called people while they have been in the bathtub or you know they're off, Maggie Edson, who won for "Wit" was in her kindergarten class teaching in Atlanta and, ahm, I had to get permission from her principal to have the principal call her out of her class room and she was literally called down to the principal's office to do interviews on the phone, and it's, it's, it's astounding the way people, like Lynn Nottage, when she, when she got the Pulitzer that day, we had just kind of agreed that she was, – like, I am

suppositious, I really am, I feel like the moment you start talking of something the chances of it happening are - , so I try to not talk about it and, but I also like to be ready and I have said to people, let's get you into to mid-town, maybe you want to have lunch with a friend of if you live in Brooklyn – maybe there is reason you have meeting or, ahm, because, taking a picture of them, it's hard to sort of wrangle all the things that need to happen on a Pulitzer day. I mean think about the Tony awards, you have a month from the day the nominations are announced to the day when the award ceremony happens. The Pulitzer happen in a 24 hour window, again it's a smallish, in some ways old fashioned, I mean they have a ceremony but it's private, ahm, there is no big televised program, there are, ahm, the coverage of it has diminished severely, the *New York Times* used to devote an entire page to it and unless they, the *New York Times* wins a bunch of Pulitzers, they don't do a lot of coverage of it and it used to be that you could expect a nice juicy interview with the playwright, who won and the book person, who won the non-fiction writer and the composer but now they do these little boxes and you are lucky if they even use a picture.

KS: Wow, ahm, how influential is PR when it comes up to the Pulitzer?

CB: Ahm, I'd like to say it's very but it's not. It's, I mean, I will say you can't campaign for a Pulitzer, you can't but by getting as many people in to see it, because you don't know who is on the committee, so, I knew that last year that "Ruined" was on the short list because a bunch of journalists were coming in from all over the country and critics coming in to see it, ahm, so I knew "oh, they must be coming because it's on the short list for the Pulitzer" and one would expect that it would be on the short list even though it's set in the Congo, it's by an American playwright and the rules what is Pulitzer eligible is always very dizzy, like the question this year will be whether or not Horton Foote's plays will be Pulitzer eligible or not because they have been written before but they have been rewritten and edited to fit this, these three play cycles, three play cycles, yes, ahm, ahm, but in terms what PR can do, if a show gets lots of attention, I am sure the Pulitzer would like to think they are giving it to the most worthy play but they have given it to plays before who have opened and closed

immediately or they haven't had a New York production, I mean one of the rules about the Pulitzer is that the play has to have been presented in New York - in the US, before it can win, so the play "Red", which is probably going to be announced this week, that is going to come to Broadway is written by an American playwright and it deals with an American theme, it's not eligible this year because it's at the National and, or it's at the Donmar Warehouse, so it has to play in the US before it can be eligible, so a lot of producers want to argue that, well "why would "Ruined" be eligible it is set in the Congo and well it is all about drug trafficking and, and you know slavery and uhhh all that stuff and oppression against women and all that - forget all that, the fact that is written by a woman by an American woman, who went to the Congo to study and came back and wrote a fantastic play about an issue, ahm, from an American point of view, and, ahm, you know if you read the Pulitzer rules, it, they are a little vague, they are a little vague about-

KS: - American life, sort of -

CB: Yeah, American life, yes, or American themes, ahm, by an American playwright. They have to be an American playwright and, ahm, you know, there have been, "I am my own wife" is a perfect example, that play by Doug Wright, won the Pulitzer, it was set in, what, Vienna?

KS: No, in Berlin, actually,

CB: Yeah, exactly, ahm, the only thing about it is, it was by an American playwright, there was no real American theme about it, except it just happened to be a spectacular play and it was the critics darling, so, ahm, you know there is no hard and fast rule.

KS: Do your, do your contracts include a Pulitzer Prize clause – in case the play wins or something?

CB: No, it should, I am very, I, I, have to be honest with you I am very good at Pulitzer day, I, I, am the only, my business partner, I don't think he has ever won a Pulitzer but, ahm, I take great pride in it. I love Pulitzer day, I know how to do it, I know the drill, I know- (assistant comes in mentions a phone call) – I'll call back. Ahm, let's me see, I am sorry.

KS: No, problem.

CB: Ahm, ah, I have a producer, who likes to call me every ten minutes. Ah, no, we don't, people who know me, know I have done, ah, I work with Manhattan Theater club and they've won I think five of the last seven or something, so we have that down to a science and this year, two plays that I am working on, I think are going to be on the short list.

KS: Which ones?

CB: "Equivocation" and, ah, "Next Fall".

KS: Okay.

CB: And then the third one would be, ahm, the Horton Foote plays, so all three of those are plays that I work on. There's an other play, well there are two other plays that I have heard of – "Circle, mirror, transformation", "Circle, mirror, transformation" and then there is one –

KS: A play like "Time Stands Still", wouldn't have a chance, you feel?

CB: "Time Stands Still" does, although why do I hear that it was submitted last year, I think it was submitted last year and didn't make the cut and, ahm, if it's been submitted, you can't submit it again, even it has been rewritten and re-titeled.

KS: There have been plays that have been – "The Piano Lesson" was nominated

the year before and won the next year.

CB: Did it really?

KS: Yeah.

CB: Oh I didn't know that, that's cool.

KS: I am not quite sure; I think there was some kind of loophole in the system, that's why it was able to do that.

CB: Right, oh that's cool

KS: Yeah. But maybe -

CB: How many did he win?

KS: I think that, that's the only one.

CB: Didn't he win for fences too?

KS: I don't think so, no. I mean, I am not a hundred percent sure, but-

CB: Okay I need to check on that because I am working on fences, I thought it did but I didn't know.

KS: Which year would that have been? When was it written?

CB: Nineteeneighty – five?

KS: Well, I am almost sure that it didn't. 'Cause it was 1985,like, I mean, I -

CB: You have been doing your research.

KS: I have but I don't want to be - in just in case that one, that would be embarrassing, ahm.

CB: Yeah.

KS: I mean I have a lot play lately but they do mix up -

CB: Yeah.

KS: - in my head, ahm. Okay so one of the plays, one of the plays that I am kind of choosing as a prime example in my thesis, as it about Pulitzer Prize winning dramas that have been adapted for the screen is "Proof" and I know you that you have worked on that too. And I have actually interviewed David Auburn on Friday.

CB: Great.

KS: So I have a bit of knowledge about it, and, ahm, so my first question would be, the first question is you started the PR right away when it was off-Broadway still?

CB: Right.

KS: Ahm, what was your strategy for promoting "Proof", I mean it was an unknown playwright and there was no big, big movie star, I mean Mary Louise was not, she was not super-

CB: No.

KS: super famous back then –

CB: No.

KS: I mean she sort of is now -

CB: Right.

KS: - on TV at least, for sure and theater, so what was your strategy for "Proof".

CB: The strategy for "Proof" was letting people see it – I mean the, early on because it was a Manhattan Theater club and off-Broadway theater, ahm, and, it was a built in subscription audience and there are an older audience and it's a, it's a perfectly, it's a perfect play, it's, it's I wanted to say a "well-made-play" but that's kind of an insult to call it a "well-made-

play" but it is a beautifully constructed, truly beautifully constructed play that has lots of surprise moments in it, when you find the father is dead, when you find out that–the big reveal, obviously there are a tons of reveals in it, when you find that the guy is a math nerd and has fallen in love with her, and that they have slept together, I mean there's a million, you know, terrifically crafted, well-made-play crafted moments, the big ones of course that's a surprise that the Proof was written by her. And what, ahm, we found out pretty early on, that people just were happy to see it and when they saw it the word-of-mouth was so strong and the reviews were so strong, that it very easily, very quickly became a play that, I knew, was going to be on the Pulitzer short list, I mean it was David's, I think, second play, I worked on his first play one that was , way, way off-

KS: Skyscraper

CB: way off-Broadway. Skyscraper - I have worked on that way, off-Broadway

KS: I read that, too.

CB: Yeah, and he is a talented guy and he had - and the other great thing was that it was discovered by Manhattan Theatre club, because he submitted through a writers program, and he, ahm, he just – it's a perfect example of a play by an a kind of unknown playwright that fit the mold of what they want in a Pulitzer Prize winning play. It's a, and plus, if you think about plays that have won the Pulitzer recently "Wit", ah, "Proof", "Doubt" ahm, they are small casts, usually one set and they can be done by theaters around the country and around the world. I mean, look, the "Proof" movie and the "Proof" production in London – not great. Ahm, the "Doubt" movie, much better and, ahm, will be seen by much more people than ever saw in off – Broadway and on Broadway. But, ahm, you know, I have worked on "Angles in America" and to think that "Angles" won the Pulitzer for Millennium Approaches and then was never a movie but was an HBO film -

KS: fantastic

CB: - and has been seen by a million people around the country, around the world and it's now going to be revived by the Signature Theater company next year, ahm, in a season devoted to Tony Kushner, ahm, it's

exciting to think, oh my gosh, I have come full circle and it was the first Pulitzer Prize show that I have gotten to be part of ahm, and, I remember I wasn't in this office, I was in an office on 46th street and Tony was in the office and, ahm, the guy, Gordon, ahm Gordon, Gordon, Gordon Davidson who ran the Taper Forum at the time at the time, we've originated the play there, and, ah, somebody else was in my office waiting for the news, and literally when the 3 o'clock call comes, I mean my phone always rings around five minutes to three, ahm, and I either up picking up the phone screaming into the all-call page "we won the Pulitzer for blah blah blah or there is no Pulitzer Prize this year." And, ahm, but I have to be honest, I pretty much know, it's not like the Kentucky derby, where you watching the horses and you are going "ahh, we ahh", you kind of know going into the final stretch.

KS: And with "Proof" you kind of felt - ?

CB: Yeah, I mean -

KS: But how you were marking it, if there wasn't a star, you said you just wanted people to see it but what was it like from the PR perspective, like, what did you try to do, where did you put adds?

CB: Well, don't, don't forget Proof was presented by an off-Broadway, not-for-profit theater company, Manhattan theater club, so they had a built in subscription audience, so the first bit of time was, ah, made up of the subscribers. So, Mary Louise wasn't exactly unknown, she has done "How I learned to drive", which she has done another Pulitzer Prize winning play. Ahm, she had, ahm, she's a quirky actress, who knows her stuff and so she was doing some interviews and some press, the fact that David was a new playwright, ahm, there were tons of, there tons of angles, ahm, about it. And, but we never gave away the ending, I mean, part of out strategy was you have to see the play to write about it. And you can't give up; give away the ending. But, ahm the other part of the play it's a great mistery, ahm, the last thing you want to do is give away the final moments of that play, ahm, because if you do, then you've ruined it for a lot of people, ahm, I mean you might pick up on clues that that might be happening. Same is true for "Doubt", "Doubt" is a mystery.

KS: Totally.

CB: And you, I still don't what Shannley intended, I don't know, and there maybe three people on the planet who do know, and he is not telling. Ahm, and, it's – so, so part of the challenge on ah, on "Proof" was, ah, not making it feel small, not making it feel like it was just a four character play about math, because that's not what it's about. It's about mothers and, mothers and fathers, it's about missing mothers, it's about sister, ah, sister relationships, it's about whether or not someone is going to fall in love.

KS: But did you expect the huge success that it was going to -

CB: No.

KS: - you know, that it was going to be the longest running show of the decade.

CB: No, I didn't. But after I saw it, and I waited, I always wait a little while before I see a show because I'm, I like to think of myself as the, as the toughest critic and the toughest audience member, and, because I have to then go sell it and if I get to enamored by, like people here are regularly going you have to read this play, I don't want to read it, I really don't want to read it, I want to see it and, ahm, I and I - (the dog is making sounds) – I am sorry she has got to find the perfect spot. Ahm, ah, so when I saw it, I literally was gob smacked, I was like, okay, this play is so good, because it was also given such a fantastic production like I saw a, ahm, production photo of a production of Proof, ahm, in my little small town, I have a house upstate and ahm -

KS: Yeah, you have, I know exactly where it is–

CB: Oh in Hillsdale. (laughter)

KS: Hillsdale, yeah (laughter)

CB: Yeah, but they did a, they ran a picture of, of "Proof", from their production of "Proof", and for the life of me I couldn't tell who played who, I mean seriously, I was like okay that's the sister and that might be the boyfriend or it could be the father, that, I mean they didn't I.D. them and at all and, or the way they I.D.ed them was totally wacko. Like this old, old like, haggardly woman's playing Catherine and I though okay she might be a good actress but I don't believe for a second that she is a young college student, who has cared for her father all these years like; and then the

guy, who was the boyfriend was the father, I think they just misidentified, I think they flipped the image or something but it was just totally weird.

KS: So when was the first time you actually thought of Proof in relation to the Pulitzer? Right when you saw it, or when?

CB: Yeah, the thing about the Pulitzer is, it has to be really well written. I mean forget that if it's got a great performance. If Mary Louise had been great in an otherwise bad production, it would never have won the Pulitzer. Ahm, Catherine Choffand, who won for, who won every major award for "Wit", would have still won those awards for "Wit", because it's a bravura performance, you know, she shaves her head, and she is a woman dieing of terminal cancer and she is a professor and she is slowly loosing her ability to communicate and it's just a heartbreak and it's a, it's a big old, big old, big old brawl. But, in "Wit" the play was a beautifully written play, about language, about poetry, about, about life, about the end of life, about how you go back and trust people that you didn't trust, I mean you know, do you know the play?

KS: Yeah, of course.

CB: I mean it's, it's one of the best plays, I've, Ive - I am so proud to have worked on it. And the same, I felt the same way about Proof but Proof wasn't as heavy. What's great about Proof is you're sitting there watching it and you are having a great time, I mean, it's funny, it's sardonic, it's surprising, it's mysterious, ahm, you find yourself learning a whole lot more about math that you ever thought you'd know. You leave feeling smarter than you've ever felt. Which I think is another key about Pulitzer play, is that, ahm, the playwright has, if the playwright is so smart that he makes you feel smarter when you leave the theater, that is, that's a sign of a good writer at work, period. But also it's also a sign of a good Pulitzer Prize winning play. Ah, so, when "Ruined" won, I mean like, you leave thinking "I didn't' know this about the Kongo, I had no idea these things were happening"

KS: Me too.

CB: "I had no idea", so you think, well, and ahm, and I think because most of the Pulitzer plays are submitted as literature - plays are meant to be performed not just read. And, ahm, the submission process is, you send

six copies of the script and they get send to the people who are of the committee, but one thing I can do, when you asked if I could influence, what PR can do, I can influence, I don't even know who is on the committee but what I can assume is that the major critics across the country are on Pulitzer committees, and I can make sure that when they're coming to New York, they see the play. Now if they call me and say I need to see "Proof" and I want to see blank, and blank, and blank. Well, I can assume that "Proof" is on the short list, now I can't do anything beyond that except, make sure their seats are good and make sure they saw the show or if somebody is out that night. Like when Mary Louise had been sick the night they had been coming, I might have said "you probably want to come an other night, the understudy is on", "Why?", "Well the show just plays better when the whole cast is – and they were a very tight cast, all four of them were Tony nominated, it ends up being, and that's where the correlation of the Tony and the Pulitzer come together. When the play is a hit, when the plays is firing on all engines, and all the people in it are getting noticed, and the casting is really good, you want the production of the play to be as good as the play on the page and you want the marketing to be as good as all those other things, so, my job is to protect it at that point. And my job is to also to protect in from over-eager producers, who want to say things like – if somebody in a, in a review says "this play is Pulitzer worthy", I wont let them say it in their adds because that to me that a) jinxes it

KS: Yeah.

CB: - that b) you show enormous hubris by doing that and what does Pulitzer worthy mean anyway? It's an award given to the playwright, it's not a marketing thing, when you win the Pulitzer, you, you can say that.

KS: Yeah.

CB: Ahm, but even to be on the short list to the Pulitzer is not a marketing, it's not a, it's not a marketing ploy, you have to win it.

KS: Yeah, ahm, do you have anything to do with, with, did you have anything with its way on to becoming a movie

CB: Ahm, no I didn't. Ahm, I did on "Doubt".

KS: Yeah, I heard that.

CB: I, got the work on the movie of “Doubt” and introduced to the theatrical community.

KS: How was that different to you, working on a play and working on a movie, especially an adapted movie?

CB: Well, the kind of great thing was they called me in early on, on “Doubt” to follow the same publicity campaign with used on the play, which is: you have to see it to talk about it, we never talk about whether or not it’s, ah, who is, ahm, right or wrong, who is the villain, who is not the villain, did he or didn’t he. Those are side bar stories you could do on “Doubt” but the chief sort of publicity angle was, ahm, “What happened? What happened? And if something happened – what do you think happened?” Ahm, and the criticism about the movie is that Meryl was a bit to sinister and people felt that she was absolutely certain that he did to the point that it swayed the movie and that’s my only criticism of the movie, that’s the little – and close ups and I can tell when I, ahm, was doing the video for the play of “Doubt”, I am not a film director, but I suddenly found myself in a position of thinking “if I go too much in close-up or cut reactions back and forth too much, I am going to tip my hand on who I think is right.”

KS: Yeah.

CB: So when I show my Columbia class the footage of “Doubt” I have to be really - I have to remind them that I was shooting it to be very much, ahm, I, I couldn’t have an opinion, I had to let like the play and the words speak for it because the moment you put the camera in really tight on Cherry Jones when she is accusing him and, the guy, you cut back to the priest who is taken aback, who do you think has just won? So marketing a play, that’s a Pulitzer contender or a Pulitzer Prize winner, ahm, to a bigger audience is tremendously tough, so the, so the movie people had a real challenge in front of them because to them the Pulitzer meant nothing, Tony was much important to them.

KS: So the prize means nothing in the industry?

CB: Well, it some it did, to some people, to some journalists it meant a lot, that it had won the Pulitzer, because if you are, it opened a lot of doors for them that they didn’t have open. So that they could go to certain journalists that as a piece of writing, ahm, that the playwright has won the

Pulitzer and he has won the Tony award and that he has won every major other prize for this play, so, and as a writer, John Patrick Shannely making his film debut as a director could talk about the piece of writing and what he was trying to do with the writing and the pit falls he avoided and where he came from and who he spoke to and who he based it on and all those things. And the fact that the best writers award in the world, next to probably to the Nobel Prize for literature, ahm, for a play anyway, ahm, went to this guy who wrote a play based on some aspects of his childhood and that helped us talk to the film company and the film company came back to us and said we want the theatrical community to embrace this film and we want them to, ahm, think we didn't 'hollywood-ize' it too much. And so one of the first things I did was bring Cherry Jones in, who originated the role, to see it and say, in truth, that she liked it -

KS: Cool

CB: - and to say that she of course knew that Meryl Streep would play the role. Ahm so, yeah, I mean, it's, it's PR. Is it getting cold for you, should I close that window?

KS: No, I am totally fine, thank you so much. Ahm, actually talking about PR specifically. 'Cause you said in the, the interview that I listened to, ahm, that most of the theater audience is in their 40s, 50s and 60s, now movie goers are so much, I mean, younger, tend to be younger -

CB: Right.

KS: - so how did you like, you know, did you know, try you to do another strategy when it came up to the movie or what to you feels like, I mean, what's the difference?

CB: Well, a lot of people, on "Doubt", there were, I think the 40s, 50s, 60s were going to see that movie because it's a movie that appealed to them, they were Meryl Streep fans, so there was an absolute one-to-one correlation there, ahm there were a lot of people who loved the play, who wanted to see what it would be like as a film. And it is a play you can see more than once, ahm, in fact we had a lot of people a lot of people came back to see "Doubt" more than once because, ahm they, same with thing "Proof", they wanted find that moment when they knew. Like, when I saw, when I saw "Doubt" thr- I saw it more than three times but there were three

absolute times I saw it with the three women who played, with the two women who played it on, ah, Broadway. And, ahm, when I saw Eileen Atkins do it, I was convinced that the, ah, the priest was innocent and that she was on a witch hunt, when I saw Cherry Jones do it, I was convinced that Cherry was correct, that the priest did it. And with Meryl I wah – I kind was in the middle-camp, I wasn't really sure.

KS: Which is kind of how it should be, shouldn't…don't you think?

CB: Yeah, exactly, I mean I am not saying that Cherry got it wrong or Eileen got it wrong, it's just they were, they were different performances and -

KS: Also Patrick, Patrick himself, he didn't do directing, you know, on the play, he did though with the movie, right?

CB: No, he did -

KS: He directed the play?

CB: No, he didn't direct the play.

KS: That's what I am saying he didn't direct the play but he did direct the movie.

CB: Yeah, exactly.

KS: So maybe that's an indication?

CB: Yeah, I mean there is, I'll do my funny line for you. There is a, ahm, one line in the play where, ahm, she, Sister Alois says, ahm, "have you ever committed a mortal sin?" ahm " Have, did you have improper relations with the boy, did you give him wine to drink?", you know "did you cross the line?", basically is the thing and he says "I did not." And she says, the words are "You lie." When Cherry Jones does it she goes "You lie.", when Aileen Akins did it "You lie." – it's kind of freighting. And Meryl's was "You lie."

KS: (laughter) That's so like it was,

CB: It's true.

KS: That was a really good.

CB: Yeah, thank you, I know perfected it. Because it, it shows me in, in a, in a really fantastic way, the way three women interpreted the way, sort of a crucial moment in the play where they basically "the gloves are off and I am now going to tell you that I am going to win" and, you know, the, the,

my only criticism about the movie of “Doubt” was the fac-, I know they have to in a movie, take it outside of the four walls of the room but there was something about those confrontation scenes happening inside that crapped principals office - we’ve all been there, you know, as a, as a, as a student, a teacher, or a parent - I was a teacher, so I know what it was like to be in that small office when you are meeting with the students or a parent and there is something incredibly claustrophobic strictly about catholic school, that, I wish they hadn’t taken that walk, of course you would not have gotten Violin, that snotty crying nose and all that, the reality is that there is something completely claustrophobic about being in that room that was captured beautifully on stage, that I don’t think you got walking the sidewalk.

KS: Ahm, something that I thought of before writing my thesis and researching, I thought that playwrights who were selling their rights to the movies were kind of selling their soul in a way, ahm, but as I was researching I realized that it seems or at least for playwrights, it seems to be true, that theater actually can not survive without the movie industry or, ahm, the TV industry, to like, support the people who work in there -

CB: Right.

KS: - how you do you feel about that?

CB: Oh, it’s true, I mean, you know a lot of, a lot of writers - Shannley, ahm, David Lindsay - Abaire, who won for *Rabbit Hole*, ahm, Maggie Edson has been hold out she has never wanted to write a thing ever since. Paula Vogel, others have gone on to write for film and would be Pulitzer contenders like Theresa Rebeck and others, ahm, ah, Adam Rap, have all written for television or film and-

KS: - same with actors.

CB: Same with actors.

KS: And directors and all of them.

CB: I mean it’s a one to one, you know, correlation. I mean, Cherry Jones goes on, from, to winning every award on Broadway for “Doubt” to getting to be on “24”, where she makes a lot of money, and she just won an Emmy award, I mean, she gets to have a life and one of the things she said to me about doing “24” was that it afforded her to go and visit her

allying parents in Tennessee. Now as a Broadway actor she wouldn't have the luxury of time because she would have Sunday afternoon till Monday afternoon off but she wouldn't have the money to take, to travel as much. But with the shooting schedule of "24" she can do that. So, I am sure that's true of playwrights, who think look if I can turn my Pulitzer Prize winning play into a movie or at least they buy it from me or if I get to write it or be a part of it. Like I think David Lindsay-Abaire is absolutely essentially part of "Rabbit hole" the movie" with Nicole Kidman. Ahm, I think that, that, it will open up of doors for David in all kinds of ways. I mean when David Lindsay—Abaire won for "Rabbit Hole" he was primarily known for a guy who wrote quirky comedies. He wasn't known for somebody who wrote a, a, Drama – I don't know did you see Rabbit hole but it's -

KS: I've read it and his teacher said "write something about that s-, write about what scares you"

CB: Oh yeah, yeah.

KS: I really like the play,

CB: And as a parent - I mean, it's one of the things we didn't do, as, in a Publicity campaign, we go and talk to the writer always first and we want to know what they want to talk about, what vs. what they don't want to talk about and this was not based on his, on his family or his children or his wife's relationship with him but, but rather what he told us was is "it was my fear of what could happen to a child", it's every parent's nightmare-

KS: Right.

CB: - about what could happen to your child, so it's crack one good drama, is what it is.

KS: Totally. So do you feel like, ahm, is it true that critics really kill or make a play live on Broadway?

CB: I have a theory about that; I think a good play can't be killed by a critic if audiences like it.

KS: Mhm.

CB: But if audiences don't like it but a critic does, it doesn't matter. Like for example Neil LaButes play "The Shape of Things", which was supposed to be on the short list for the Pulitzer but really wasn't. Ahm, people just didn't like it, there were a couple of critics who did but it didn't matter, so yeah, a

critic can stop a play from being seen by a lot of people but if the word of mouth hasn't caught on yet or if people genuinely aren't liking it. (scratching sound) Ahm, it's Pete. (the dog) Ahm they, I think they can; they say critics can kill it but I think an audience kills it or a lack of an audiences or lack of audiences interest in something can kill it. I mean, there is a reason why things like "Mama Mia" and, ahm, "Wicked" and other things that didn't get great reviews are still running – people like it.

KS: Ahm, do you feel like because, the, the serious plays have such a hard time, like people in it have a such a hard time surviving, do you feel there is any way out of it?

CB: Ahm,

KS: Or do you think it will always be that way?

CB: It will always be that way. Again People come to Broadway to, tourists come to Broadway to see a musical, if they stumble, I mean– for example *God of Carnage* – perfect example, going to see *God of Carnage* is like a musical because you are seeing a star, the play, play everybody was, at least up until a few months ago, it was the play everybody was talking about, ahm, it was 80 minutes, it goes by like that (he snaps), you leave wanting to talk to somebody about it, ahm, and, ah, it, it plays like a musical in some ways, 'cause it's big and it's, you know, you kind of can't, you can't miss it. "A View from the Bridge" is kind of like that, it's an opera, I mean it also is an opera, it has been also written as an opera, it's been, it is very operatic in the way it's written and performed. In this case people get their money's worth and it is also the hottest ticket in town right now, so. In a fairly quiet season it's the standout but in might still be the standout in what will become a very crowded season. I mean good is good is good is good, you know what I mean, if something is good, it, you know. If it wins awards or if it has a star performance or whatever, I mean like. For example Steady Rain, the show that Daniel Craig and, ahm, Hugh Jackman did last year was sold on from the second it went on sale to very end. Wasn't a particularly good play, it didn't, it wont win any awards, it, but the people who went to see it were more excited by the fact that they got a ticket and that they got to see Daniel Craig and Hugh Jackman in the flesh and they didn't really care that it wasn't that great.

Same with Julia Roberts when she did “Three Days of Rain”, ahm, she wasn’t very good but it didn’t matter because –

KS: - it was Julia Roberts.

CB: It was Julia Roberts and they got to see Julia Roberts and they got to gp home to their families and friends and say we saw Julia Roberts this close.

KS: Ahm, going back to adaptations. What do you feel is the greatest flaw of adaptations, what do you feel they can never, ahm, achieve?

CB: Opening them up for, opening up for what the film, the camera has to do. I mean sometimes I think the camera can fill in the blanks and can do something the audience does for it, that----- Like I, like going back to my, the example about the fourth wall of the – you image that, that, ahm, principal’s office much better in the play than you did in the movie. Didn’t –

KS: Right.

CB: It felt like a gigantic office to me. And it was, it was a very big office. On stage it was tiny. Like people literally had to unge around each other to get past each other. In fact part of the blocking was reaching for the sugar and then having to pull back and going past her chair and all that. And in the, in the movie it was just like, she had a sweat of offices; like it was the biggest principals office I have ever seen. And that’s just because that’s the way it was constructed and they had to do it that way. Ahm, but I think one of the, the things that it can do, is sometimes extraneous, something that a camera angle can catch, like I think in “Doubt”, that first time you see Meryl Streep, when she is in the church and she is watching all the kids who are in church, who aren’t behaving and you don’t see her, it’s a star entrance, right. And she has got her bonnet down and you know it’s Meryl but you don’t see her face as she patrols and you just, from the first second you see her you know she is in charge, you know who that woman is. Now, it takes a good five minutes of the play to get her personality. And, the play, no matter who plays her, the actress who plays Sister Aloysius knows that she is going to be a battle ax, that she is going to be tough, you aren’t going to have some sweet, you know, actor try to everybody over. Nobody, who plays Sister Aloysius plays it to be the audience’s favorite, you have to be the villain.

KS: The other sister is the favorite.

CB: Right. Exactly and you're the villain only because you may or not be right and all is the courage of your convictions. And most villains have the courage of their conviction to go steel, rob, rob something or take something. Ahm, so, what I loved about what film could do, were images, the catholic images, the things that were shown, the religious things, you can't really convey and in a play they would have been seen as way too much. You know, I mean.

KS: Did you see "Proof the movie, how did you feel about the movie because you said you didn't like it?

CB: It just, it just. I just didn't like it. It just felt, it just felt too pedestrian. There is a reason it didn't work. People just didn't want to see it. And I think casting Gwyneth, you know, I don't know, I mean. Her momma may have passed and, she was good, apparently she was good in it. You know, lot of people liked her but, ahm, and she was perfectly fine in it. But with, with Mary Louise, I mean, I had a hard time, I saw three actresses do it and all three were perfectly fine. But my problem with the theater is, when you see somebody do something and then you see somebody new come in and do it, rarely is it is as, as potent as it is the first time you have ever seen it. That's why remakes don't really work for me unless it's just spectacular. You know, I am a little nervous about seeing "Angels in America" because I, ahm, saw what I know to be the definitive production of "Angles in America". Although the HBO is really good, it really is very, very good.

KS: I have a hard time imagining that as a play, actually, 'cause I have never seen it as a play, but only read it. And I have seen the HBO productions but like the sky opening, angels coming out, like – I am excited to see that on stage sometime.

CB: Well, you'll come back next year and see it at Signature. It will be, it will be something to see.

KS: For sure. Ahm. Do you feel that once, once a play has been turned into a movie, that the actual play becomes obsolete, or?

CB: No.

KS: In your, in your experience, do plays live on like, do they a healthy life after the movie version?

CB: Yeah, I mean, I am working on a play, ahm, of "The Miracle Worker", right now, which is coming back. And right now, I would say we are struggling, in terms of - we have not started performances yet, but. It's a 50-year-old play, that did not win a Pulitzer, we thought it did but it didn't. We should have done our homework - we should have called you.

KS: Yes, I would have known.

CB: Yes, exactly. But, but ah, people think its creaky, they've seen it at their high school, they know it. They, they, don't know they need to see it again.

But, ahm, the great thing about the Pulitzer is it doesn't always go to the most popular play of the year, it goes to the best-written play of the year. And remember, the Tony award goes to the playwright and the producer. So it's, there used to be, for the Tonys, the best pay writing play and the best production. And now it's one. So the Pulitzers are a pure award. So sometimes it might not be a fantastic play production. Like when Horton Foote won it for "The gentleman from – what's it called" The gentleman from?

KS: oh "Atlanta, "the young man -

CB: - "The young man from Atlanta".

KS: Yeah.

CB: Yeah. People didn't like the production at all but the writing was good. So, it, and, "The Kentucky Cycle", "The Kentucky Cycle" as a play was, as a piece of literature, was astounding -

KS: Great

CB: Great. But it just didn't last here. Because it was just too much and it's - wasn't something people wanted to see it.

KS: Yeah, I have a hard time imagining that as a play as well.

CB: Yeah.

KS: I read it and really liked it but -

CB: But it was like a big hit in Seattle and then it came here and people just didn't, they just didn't buy it.

KS: But, ahm, back to, back to the whole play becoming obsolete - but after a movie, you do feel like it doesn't affect the, the life of the play, it will still be performed and people still want to go and see it?

CB: No, I mean, like, if you think about "Chicago" the musical as winning the Oscar. I mean, it's, "Chicago" as popular as it was when it opened15 years ago.

KS: Oh cool.

CB: Sometimes it just makes people say "Oh I've seen that, I know that, I want to see it" and the popularity of "Doubt" and "Proof" and "Wit"" and "Rabbit Hole" in regional productions after movies or after adaptations. I mean "Wit", I am betting "Wit" is still performed in as many theaters, who were doing it five, six years ago as after the HBO movie with, ahm,

KS: She died recently – ahm –

CB: Emma Thompson.

KS: Emma Thompson, yeah.

CB: So I think that, yeah, it doesn't. I don't think it hurts it, I think. Where Pulitzer does help is that if you're a theater company and you're outside of New York, you're saying you are doing the Pulitzer Prize winning play of something, chances are, you, it will help you.

KS: What was, what was a surprising flop to you; that you thought was going to be a real big hit and then it surprised you and wasn't a hit?

CB: Oh God there are so many of them. Well "Rag Time" this year was disappointing, it should- and "Brighton Beach" should have done better. Ahm, what, what, to me what the big shock of this year was "Broadway Bound" not being done.

KS: Which one?

CB: "Brighton Beaches" companion piece is "Broadway Bound" and it didn't even get a chance to be on stage. Ahm and that's a really, really good play and it didn't get done. Ahm -

KS: So how attached are you to the pieces that you, that you work on? Are you -

CB: Pretty attached. I mean, you know, I have to remember it's work and it's business and if it doesn't work, it's nothing I can do about it. And once the paycheck stops, I have to move on and stop working on it. But, ahm, if,

if I am going to have a relationship, like for, like for example I worked with, on a lot of Tony Kushner plays. And ahm, his new play "The Intelligent Homosexual" will get done somewhere along the way. It was done in Minneapolis and had a short, well, experience in the Geoffrey. It will get done some time and my guess is that I will be evolved in it in some way. I am not Tony's personal press rep but in some way I am because I am a friend and I have been enmeshed in his work and I will be working on "Angeles in America" and that's coming full circle for me. So it's very hard for me to let go of a play when I have been involved. So, I am going to flip the question, when you said, ahm, what play, and I don't want to knock this play, but it's the truth. When "Red Light Winter" was on the short list for the Pulitzer Prize a couple of years ago but I was kind surprised. I thought it was a really good play but I was surprised it was Pulitzer contender.

KS: Which year?

CB: Ahm, probably three years ago, the year they didn't w- award. It was the same year that "Inteligent Design" of Jenny Chow(?!) –

KS: But the year that nobody won.

CB: Nobody won. And, ah, I just thought "Ha, really, "Red Light Winter", Pulitzer Prize, interesting", again really smart play, but between you and me and this tape recorder, I really didn't think it was Pulitzer Prize worthy.

KS: Ah, in your work, obviously viewing the house in Hillside as I read in the article, involves a lot of pressure, where do you feel the greatest pressure comes from in your work?

CB: My own.

KS: Your own.

CB: Yeah, I mean have, we as an office have very high standards. Having a blackberry makes us available 24/7. Ahm, we, ahm, with the world of instant information and news and gossip columns and chat sides and blogs and twitter and facebook you, you, can never be working fast enough to keep up. And with the ever-diminishing number of newspapers and true journalists, I mean the odds are so stacked against you that ahm, but at the end of the day the real test for me is how well we've done. And, ahm, you know, on setting out, I went after to get the play "Next Fall" done

because I do think it's a Pulitzer Prize contender, I do think it's; and whether or not it wins I just think it's a play that needs to be seen and I wanted to work on it and I actually campaigned to get the play, that doesn't happen, I don't, I try not to do that, I try to let people if they want me they come get me and we try to work out a deal. But, ahm, every once in a while a play comes along that you really, really want to do and that's, that was one of them. But I also knew by doing all that and going after it, that, that strategically, I owe them something and I owe myself something. And I wouldn't be able to sleep at night, I don't sleep at night as it is, but I wouldn't be able to sleep at night if I just said that I would do it and then sort of walk away from it. So, every single day we strategize about all the plays we work on. I mean we run our shows like political campaigns, we really do, like,

KS: And with like new media like facebook and twitter.

CB: Absolutely.

KS: You're going specifically towards the younger audience, or?

CB: Well, I don't know that twitter and facebook are just for the younger audience. You have to remember there is a cross roads where the younger audience either goes to the theater or doesn't. And I think it's probably right now is pretty small where they, where the win diagram would sort of get you there. But, ahm, I think that you have to broaden your appeal, your reach and if you don't, you're never going to get people. I think, I think a play like "Proof", a play like "Doubt", a play like "Ruined" need to be seen by younger audiences and I think towards the end of their runs they were being seen by younger audiences.

KS: How do you feel about trailers now in the theaters? I find that really interesting that plays are now, ahm, you know publicized with trailers, I am surprised. How do you, do you think it works really well?

CB: No, they don't work really well, I think, I think they are one of many things people are trying to see if they are going work. The truth is they are too expensive to do. A scene from a play when you are going to see movie looks flat and looks boring, ahm, unless it's shot really well and then, you can't. – Like I don't know if you've seen the commercial for "West Side Story" but it's a fantastic commercial because they went out of the theater

and they actually have these gang guys chasing each other and they go climbing up chain link fences and down them and then the next thing you know they're dancing and then they're fighting and then they're dancing and it's a fan- watch it on youtube it's really, really good.

KS: Cool.

CB: And you get the essence of "West Side Story" but you don't get -. But then it ends up, cut with some performance footage but it happens so fast that you don't think you are seeing a Broadway show and yet you know you're seeing a Broadway show, which at the end of the day you're selling a Broadway show. Ahm, I mean that to me this is the big, that's an other discussion but trying to sell a Broadway show to people who don't go to Broadway shows, who ultimatively have to pay a 100 Dollars and have to sit for 2 ½ hours in a Broadway theater, watching a Broadway show.

KS: Yeah.

CB: And it's the moment you try to say "oh it's not that", it is. So you have to be really, really, really careful. Ahm, so, yeah.

KS: I have one, I have one, oh yeah, one question before my other question. Ahm, I am about to, and this is only between you and me and the tape recorder, I am about to interview Linda Winer, ahm, the critic.

CB: Winer.

KS: Winer, sorry, that's a very -

CB: - good, do that because she is very sensitive to that because there is an other critic named Winer, so think of like wine, a good glass of –

KS: Oh I am so sorry.

CB: And I was with her last night, so yeah.

KS: So, so you know her and she is -

CB: Yes, very well.

KS: And you, she is a likeable critic?

CB: And she has been on the Pulitzer Committee, several, several times.

KS: Yeah I know, she was the chair for "Proof", so I am really hoping that she'll -

CB: she'll talk.

KS: - she'll talk.

KS: I mean she said she will find the time. So she is a likeable critic?

CB: Absolutely.

KS: And a fair one, too.

CB: Absolutely.

KS: Okay.

CB: One of the best.

KS: Okay, that is good to know. I have one kind of, ahm, personal question.

CB: Sure.

KS: And I hope you forgive for asking. Ahm, as I was reading your biography and looked at your life, the little bits that I found, ahm, I saw that you started out wanting to be an actor. How, ahm, was that way for you to give up that dream, then work in the industry so close to that former dream. How was that for you, do you still sometimes hang on to that, have you given up that – How was that for you, that dream?

CB: I sort of feel that I perform every single day, you know. And last night I, I conducted a seminar with Linda and a couple other journalists and I moderated a panel and - . I perform when I go to meetings, I perform when I have to stand up in front of a group of people and talk about a play or introduce people. And I, I didn't really have the stomach for rejection, that was for me, that's the personal answer, is I wanted to be in control of my own destiny and I just couldn't see myself as one of many and I never expected to be successful doing this. I, I stumbled into this and I found out, you know. I actually woke up a couple of nights, you know a long time ago and thought, "Wow, wow I get this, I, I might actually be good at this. I actually like this." And I was a good actor but I was not, I don't think I was a great actor. I would have done some things very well and some things probably not. And I probably would have just been one of many, if I'd even made it. But what I didn't want to do was come to New York, wait tables and hope; because I am the kind of person, who has to be in charge of things. And when you are an actor you are never in charge of your own destiny, never. I mean you're never in charge of what the final cut of the movie is going to look like, you're not in charge you are going to get the role like, you are not in charge of what the director wants you to do, what you are going to look like.

And at least for me, I got to fulfill my own dreams for myself by doing what I do and I am very, very, ah, protective of actors. And, ah, I've just started recently a media training, ahm, division for the office, where we go and we talk to actors about how to do an interview and how to conduct themselves in front of a camera, in front of a journalist, to how to answer the question correctly and not get too, ah, not to be too invasive and not, ah, reveal too much, if they're not, you know. A lot of actors are trying to hide who they are or, or aren't very smart. And we try to help them. Ahm, so I feel, I have channeled my, my own passions into something else. You know, every once in while, but I'd be lying, I, I don't miss it, I don't miss it. There was a moment when I first started when I saw terrible actors in plays that I thought" God, I could be so much better than that." Ahm, but I never really go back and imagine a career for myself in the theater, I mean, as an actor, I, I don't. There, there are a couple of roles along the way that I think "wow, that would have been fun to play." But only in the production that I saw and only in the fact that, you know, that I could do my three impersonations of sister Aloyisa, is enough for me, it really is, I mean. There are times whenever I hear a line reading and think "God, that is so not the way I would have done it" but then I don't know what went into the, the rehearsal and I, I also see so many plays, that I think I know a good actor when I see one and I know when they are really good, they are so incredibly good. Like Mary Louise Parker, I, is not my favorite people in the world but she is one of the best actresses going because she is always surprising, she is always good. Cherry Jones happens to be one of my favorite people in the world and she happens to be one of the best actresses on the planet. And it's, you know, it's astounding for me when somebody who is so, so good, like John Slattery, who is on "Mad Man" and was in "Rabbit Hole" with Cynthia Nixon, is an other actor who can kind of do no wrong. His line readings are always so interesting. And John Slattery and I are about the same age and we think and he is a friend and I always think I would like to have John Slattery's career, you know, I could have maybe had that career but I don't think I could have, what John Slattery does, which is face rejection, been a stage actor when he wanted to be doing films, ahm, take the crumbs that are sometimes offered him. I

mean he was, he auditioned for the role of Don Draper on “Mad Man” and ended up getting Roger Sterrling, which was the better choice but at the moment I am sure he was like “Damn, I really wanted the lead role on that TV series.” So, no, I don’t, I don’t regret it.

KS: You don’t feel pain anymore inside.

CB: No, I don’t, I don’t. Because, I, I also, to be honest I am not so sure that all actors are that smart and I like to think I am smarter than they are. Not smarter that anybody that I am working with. But smarter in knowing that every morning I wake up and I know exactly what my day is going to be or at least I have a sense of what it is going to be. God knows what Scott Rooten wanted on the phone but ahm. So I think, I mean it’s yeah, it’s not anything that I regret.

KS: I am going off the record now.

CB: Okay.

END OF INTERVIEW.

Interview mit Terence Lamude vom 12. Februar 2010 – geführt und transkribiert von Katharina Sporrer

Katharina Sporrer: Okay, ahm, first I would like to know what was your first contact with the play „Proof“?

Terence Lamude: I saw it at Manhattan Theatre Club where it was first produced in 2000, ah, it was for, the Off-Broadway production of it and I later saw it when it moved to Broadway with the same cast. Then I went back to see it with each successive cast. So I saw it four times in New York before I actually directed it.

KS: And how did you feel about the play when you first saw it and through the different versions with the different cast members.

TL: I liked the play when I first saw it, I thought it was hinged sometimes in a trick but because the performances where so compelling, especially Marie-Louise Parker in the original role, in the leading role, that I did, I sort of went with the story. As I have seen successive cast do it, ah, the second and third cast, ah, I wasn't, I wasn't, I didn't think it was as much of play as when I first saw it. I saw that, ahm, some of the writing, I think it's well written, I think that shall we say there is less there than meets the ear.

KS: Okay.

TL: But I like the play.

KS: So how come that you directed it? How did that come about?

TL: I was asked by the Vienna English theatre because I had directed a play for them the season before, “Someone to watch over me” by Frank Mc Guiness and they asked me to direct “Proof”. It was probably because I am American and they hadn't really used very many American directors, only a couple before. And I think because the play I have done there had been well received, they asked me to do it. And I cast, I did the casting in London. And I used, I cast two American actresses in the two women role's who happened to live in London. And who did their schooling there, their drama training and remained. And the two gentlemen were both English. And I had to work with them to become more American. The younger fellow Hall, he had far less of a good time, he got the accent rather quickly, I think young British actors are quite good at doing the

American accent now, they used to be dreadful but they are quite good now. It was the behaviour, the physical behaviour that I had to get from him because he had that very restrained typed English body language and he had to be extremely loose and he was very successful. And the older actor had the opposite, he could be quite loose but his American sounds were not always very forthcoming and so that, those notes where given right to the very last minute and he finally got it.

KS: That's great but how was your, how do you deal with directing a play that you have seen so many times, where you have seen like the famous Broadway production with Marie-Louise and I've heard of people who've seen her in the role and then seen, as you similarly just said, other people in the role, it wasn't as potent. How did you, as director deal with the material now after seeing the Broadway shows.

TL: Well, a lot of it you sort of mould to the actors that you have, I mean if you remain open in the auditions, I mean you have very definite ideas of course. I knew I couldn't repeat Marie-Louise Parker because she has a certain set of mannerisms and style that are uniquely her own and that's why I say I run hot and cold with her, sometimes I don't like her at all and other times I love her like I did with "Proof" but they are peculiar to Marie-Louise but it did show me that unless you cast it strongly, the play isn't really going to work and the role of Catherine, as in the role, is quite key and I had found a young Catherine, who absolutely perfect. She as much Catherine off-stage as she was on-stage, very feisty and extremely naturalistic, despite her British training, she was as American an actor as you possibly get and the actress who played Claire was from California, raised in Beverly Hills. Her father was, someone you probably don't know but his name was John Gavin, if you ever seen a film "Psycho" by Hitchcock done, he is the leading man in it // and he was big, sort of a second level Hollywood star but he became because he was half Mexican, he, under Reagan and he was a very conservative Republican, he was made // ambassador of Mexico and made a killing, as you usually do, because of the quite unsuccessful business ties with Mexico //. Anyway this was his daughter and so, she being raised in southern California was as American as you can get despite British affectations she had now

acquired, it was very easy to get her back to being very American. So in doing it differently - I went at it in a different way, in the sense the set was more stylized. The set, I wanted to suggest the interior of the mind of the father and of Catherine and so though it was somewhat more ramps // of the house, it was all translucent. So it was all scrapped open //, a frame of a house and inside were stacks and stacks of books, all at very uneven angles, shelves that were all // and books glued together all that, so shelves looked like they were about to collapse, they were leaning and books almost tumbling towards you. It was a disordered intellectual mind. That's why I wanted the house to be a character in the play, that really // the mindset of the father and the central character of Catherine. And I think European audiences are more open to that use of set design. That was very different from the set that was done in New York, which was extremely naturalistic. We had the door, the steps, we had everything the actors needed to use was very real, it was very realistic; table, chairs and things like that but everything around them, surrounding all and the frame of the house and the interior of the house you had to walk through was quite stylized. So, I think that's a chance in the perception of the audience lifts a play because there is a danger with American acting // because television and film, reach far more audiences, that by their very nature they don't do stylized, they do naturalism for the most part. And so there is a perception, I think, of an audience walking into a theatre and see something so naturalistic that it's television and that can hurt the perception of the play and even thinking "oh this is very television, this drama" and, and indeed it can sometimes the writing improve gear towards television, so by giving it a more theatrical set, you first of all say: This is theatre. This is not a movie, this is not television and, and then the acting is a little more free to be, to plum // it more deeply, to widen the vision of it because you have given them a playground or nursery as I like to call it sometimes to really expand the performance beyond the naturalistic boarders.

KS: Do you feel or who do you feel is the villain in the play or is there a villain?

TL: Ahm, no I don't think there is a villain. I mean I think that the sister Claire, ahm, which I think is a very underwritten part and, and, a very, she is used more as a device, I think she is the least successfully written character. Ah, I think that sometimes she is set up to be an antagonist, rather than say a villain. I purposely cast against that and made her to be very sympathetic. I remember a brawl with the costume designer about how he wanted to costume her, he was British, and he had an idea of, that all Manhattan women get up in a, looking like they are in a, live on the upper east side and somehow wrap themselves in silk ropes, and, even when they are in a backyard in Chicago and everything that she was to wear was to scream, you know "New York sophisticate" and of course that's what this woman is at all. She is sophisticated but not nearly as much as she thinks she is but she is a hard working person. So that was, we would have killed the actresses performance, if I had not - and I had to fight the artistic director on this as well because she was their favourite designer and that I had actually quibbled with him was // It would have been absurd. And that fortunately I had a very, very charming and naturally charming actress as Claire, so even everything, that doesn't soften the character, doesn't make her easier to digest, I think it added dimension to her – sorry, can I have a decaf - it added dimensions to her, that I think frankly are not in the writing.

KS: Do you feel that the father is the classic American father, the classic American dad?

TL: Well, he certainly wasn't in mine, so I can't say that's true, ahm, I am not sure there is such a thing, really.

KS: What was he?

TL: No, I think the classic American dad, I think that you find really on television tends to be a // and ineffectual //, which I don't think this father in this play is at all. I don't think that's the American Dad but I think that's what television likes to see him, you know. Makes him sympathetic and a bit of a fool, I think. No, I think the father is extremely strong, wilful, genius, I don't think that could be called typical and // or anything.

KS: Right, ahm, were you when you – were you when you watched it aware that it would be Pulitzer Prize worthy? Or that it would become a Pulitzer Prize winner, when you first saw it?

TL: Ahm, I thought there was a very strong possibility because there is a certain type of play that the Pulitzer as a committee seems to award the best drama to and it tends to be what I call "middlebrow", which are interesting plays always with curious subject matter and it's usually very American about American life but it also, it flatters the audience, in this case because of mathematics, it flatters the audience into thinking that it is more intelligent than it actually is. And not to say that the audience is not intelligent but I am not sure many mathematicians were in the house, you know. But, ah, because it really isn't about mathematics but it gets just, just; it's more intelligent than it really is, I think in that sense it flatters the audience. I think that is, with some exception of course, what wins the Pulitzer Prize.

KS: Did you watch in that year the other plays that were short listed, "Weaverly Gallery" by Kenneth Lonergan and "The play about the baby" by Edward Albee. Did you see these productions?

TL: I did. I did – of those three I would have awarded it to "Proof" as well. I hated "The play about the baby", I think it's a dreadful play. Edward Albee is someone I run hot and cold – I haven't liked a play of his for twenty years until "Three Tall Women", I loved it and I loved "//" and then I think it was really rubbish since then again. I think he had, you know, a great somehow come back with "Three Tall Women", I think that's a terrible play. "Weaverly Gallery" is a good play but it's about aging and it's, I found that a very conventional, ---blackspee --??- we call it TV-movie over here, which is, we call it "Lifetime channel movie", which, I don't know if you know what that is, it's, forgive me for saying this, it's the women's channel, which is terrible, ahm, then again it's weepy, you know, soap opera sort of films but it's always about a disease or aging or something like that. Sorry, we call them "Lifetime movies", those sorts of plays, you know. Of those three I would have definitely given it to "Proof".

KS: Ahm, how do you, so do you feel like in general, you, the Pulitzer Price is pretty predictable, like when you watch a season on Broadway -

TL: - yes.

KS: - you can kind of predict it?

TL: Yes,

KS: Yeah.

TL: Easily.

KS: The “Middlebrow style” play.

TL: Oh yes, which it’s usually Drama, it was never going // to a Comedy. So “Doubt” to me was to me a very definite, you know – you cannot be too on commission. For example there was a kind of movement to award the Pulitzer to “Love! Valour! Compassion!” and I think the Pulitzer Committee having already awarded “Angles in America”, which is really about a very dire subject, you know, so, they did get their liberal points by voting that, although there was no question that “Angeles in America” deserved the Pulitzer, no question. I don’t recall what won the year of - I think it was a play called “The Man from Atlanta” by Horton Foote, which is okay but it’s like watching paint dry, frankly and I saw “Love! Valour! Compassion”, though flawed, was strikingly different in the subject matter, you know of gay men and a summer retreat and their sort of household there.// You know outrages and really in the fact that it was so successful and Frank Richardson //, the very powerful play producer //, he really fought for, he fought against it and his power was so, so much that apparently he was the one who killed that Pulitzer for “Love! Valour! Compassion!”. He had immense power, that was of // Ahm, so, yes, I think it is quite predictable what wins.

KS: Do you, what, ahm, how would you describe the importance of the Pulitzer within the American theatre?

TL: Ahm, I think it’s more, at this point box offices, where // it’s most // valued and I mean, it is a great honour, there is no question, I mean to say that you’re a Pulitzer Prize playwright. I mean I met with David Auburn, the author of “Proof” and I liked very much and I don’t mean to mind his play, I like his play very much but I also found when you’re directing a play you find flaws, you know, and that was true on this one. At 32 years of age to win a Pulitzer Prize, my God, your career is set, plus there is a great honour to it. Ahm, I think at this point it’s more nerves // for someone who

did “Proof” in Vienna at the English Theater, the European Premiere of it, that, I, I asked them why they were not in the advertising saying that it also won the Tony award, which in some ways is big box, bigger office value in this country than the Pulitzer because the Tony is televised. And they told me the Tony award means nothing in Vienna, so they said but the Pulitzer does. And I found that very interesting and that was true, because they are equally as old. But -
(KS shakes her head)
Well close - for Drama?
(KS shakes her head)
When was the first Drama?
[viele Stimmüberlagerung]
KS: The first Drama for Pulitzer, the Pulitzer started in 1917, 1918 was the first drama award awarded.
TL: The first drama in 1918?
KS: Mhm.
TL: Really?
KS: For Mary J – For “Why Marry?” by – I’ve forgot the name. But “Why Marry?”
TL: Oh I didn’t realize, sorry, I thought it was after World War Two for Drama, I thought.
KS: Mhm.
TL: Oh forgive me.
KS: Yeah, it started then. Drama was one of the first – ahm –
TL: Forgive me I didn’t realize.
KS: The Tony was kind of like a reaction to the Pulitzer Prize. That the people were so appalled by the, by the choices that the Pulitzer committee made.
TL: Sorry, which ones, the Tony –
KS: The Tony, yeah, and then the theatrical community said “we want to have a price that’s our own, where we actually decide who gets the price –
TL: And what year was that 1947 or something?
KS: I don’t know, it was quite a bit later –
TL: Oh, yeah, yeah.

KS: Ahm, it was after for example, it was after, ahm, “Virginia Wolfe” didn’t win, after “Who is afraid of Virginia Wolfe?” didn’t win.

TL: Oh no, there were already Tony Awards.

KS: It was a bit –

TL: No, there were Tony Awards in the 1950s. // won a Tony as well and Fredrick Marge // won best actress –

KS: There was one play –

TL: There was one, yes.

KS: There was one play

TL: Yes.

KS: That caused a big. I thought it was “Virginia Wolfe” maybe it wasn’t.

TL: No, it was “Glass Menagerie” lost to Mary Chase’s play “Harvey”

KS: That could have been it.

TL: And then that was such a shock, I think, but highly successful.

KS: Yeah, I think there was one play that was a real big shock and there –

TL: One was “Who is afraid of Virgina Wolfe” was refused the Pulitzer, that was a big shock actually, they didn’t give it to anyone that year.

KS: Ahm, so do you feel like // that the Tony has more artistic value because of –

TL: No, no, no, I didn’t say that, no, no, I said it has more value at the box office.

KS: Do you feel that artistically either one of those has greater value?

TL: Ahm, probably the Pulitzer because the Pulitzer can go to an off-Broadway play and it can go – it does not have to be a play in New York, it can go to Regional Theater, it just has to be written by an American author, where the Tony, you have to play Broadway, so that limits the list of, so I think in that sense and a lot of times because a play wins the Pulitzer it helps it to get moved to Broadway.

KS: Right. Are you aware of the process, how the Pulitzer Prizen is –

TL: Vaguely -

KS: - given out?

TL: - the committee recommends, yeah.

KS: Okay, are you aware, are you aware of who chooses the committee and who chooses the board?

TL: No, are you?

KS: Yeah.

TL: Okay.

KS: It is just interesting for me to like interview people who are so in the theatre community are not aware of the processes, you know, because that basically it is just a board of journalists who decide.

TL: Right, right, right.

KS: There is now, until recently -

TL: That, I knew that.

KS: - it was only, it was only three theatre critics and an academic deciding, only now recently a writer is in the jury as well and also the jury is appointed by the board as well, so it's a completely –

TL: Well, that part I did know, that it is run by journalists and they actually have the final say, not the committee but that I did know, I thought you meant how each individual journalist is selected.

KS: Exactly, the main thing is that // they are selected by the board, so it's like there is no, what I meant by not knowing, there is no actual official process.

TL: It shouldn't surprise you that people in the business don't follow necessarily that –

KS: Yeah.

TL: - because that's not what we focus on, we are focusing on our work, you know.

KS: I know but what I mean, it is such an important price and it doesn't feel like it is very transparent to people.

TL: It's important but then again it bears greater significance to people who aren't in the business, we go, we every day go about it, all work, we don't think about things like that. It just a lot, it doesn't enter into our vision. For example when I was just directing a play, I have no idea what plays opened and I read the times every day and I read astound reviews but I just don't have time. I have to focus on my own work, and, so and the same thing when the Pulitzer comes out, you say "oh, great, Pulitzer". You, your day is not wrapped up around that, you know and so it's not important to us. I think probably when something wins or when if you're

thinking “oh, you’re shitting, they gave it to that”, you know, or something like that.

KS: Right.

TL: That’s the only time, apart from that, you know, I think Producers, Press Agents worry more about prizes.

KS: In, ahm, in theatre you were talking about the, about the power the *New York Times* critic has. How do you, do you feel that the power of the critics is just, like it can really kill a show-

TL: Oh unquestionably.

KS: in New York.

TL: Unquestionably.

KS: Yeah

TL: The power of “a” critic “The *New York Times*”. And I grew up here when there were seven or eight major dailies, I say eight because there was a great newspaper in Brooklyn and it was very popular if you lived in Brooklyn. But there were seven major dailies if you lived in Manhattan and you know, and, and, everybody was working here and they, there were morning papers, eve-, afternoon papers and there were evening papers, different editions. It was, so there were a lot of critics. And there was a rival to the paper, to the *New York Times*, called the Herald Tribune, which is now people know it as the International Herald Tribune, which has nothing to do- I mean, that was the European wing of that paper but it is now issued // by the *New York Times*. But that paper is now gone. One news paper // huge newspaper strike in 1964 by the printers that killed the pa, various, many newspapers. And, ahm, but up until that point there were a lot, the critics had power but it really watered down because people have so many different opinions. Now that it came down to the *New York Times*, because people read the New York post, New York daily news are not big theatre goes necessarily, although they’ll see one musical a year or something, so the power really came down, I mean, magazines like the New Yorker or New York magazine, they have some power but there is nothing like the *New York Times* and it can kill, close a play before even a magazine review can come out. So, its power for plays is unquestionable, its power for musicals, hmh, “Wicked”, for example, did not get a great

review from the *New York Times* and yet it is still on. Because lots of little girls want to see it.

KS: Do you feel, what do you, what do feel does a successful show in New York need? What are the ingredients of a successful show in New York?

TL: Oh God, I have no idea to answer that; there are so many different ingredients. Well a - (Laughter) a *New York Times* review, if it's a play. It needs two, cutting age *New York Times* seems to think it likes, you know. And on the other hand it will surprise in a more conventional play which are around because they were so well done, they were liked, so I think that certain subject matter is – the family is always something Americans love. So // something about subject matter, than that's something // they would like for a contemporary. Political, it depends. If it is in a subscription house, that helps, if it comes from London, it already has headway // because had won the Olivier or equivalent of the Tony in London or anything like that. That's a huge help, because it has already, most likely, Ben // twice a year goes to London to // people have already reviewed and given it a good review, it is on the basis of that review of the London production, that they are bringing it over, so there is that build in success already built into it. Stars have become increasingly powerful for box office in New York. You cannot get good reviews and still sell out like Julia Roberts in "Three Days of Rain". So all that but you can sneak through, "Doubt" // because a major voice in New York theatre is really the Jewish audience, especially in New York, which is very large theatre going group, so the play about the catholic church and of course it's a scandal that is about paedophilia (!?!?!) but that that was so successful is rather remarkable.

Marie-Louise Parker was a star here, not that she was the biggest star because of "Proof" but not enough to sell tickets on Broadway.

KS: Where do you feel now there is more room for innovative plays, in regional theatre or in New York theatres?

TL: I am not sure either, to be honest. It's a rather sad state of affairs. I think certain regional theatres, it is true are open to more innovative plays. I think a lot of times though regional theatres do what worked in New York,

you know. They do, do new plays. Not most of them, most of them do not do new plays because they are just chancy at the box office and you know, especially in this period of recession and all that and we don't have quite the arts funding that lets say, most of the European countries have, so they have – we get a lot of corporate funding but that has dried up in this recession almost totally so they have to be very, very careful. So being innovative, there are certain theatres that do, do that, absolutely and other theatres do new works but they are a little bit more conventional but most of the regional theatres do wait and see if it gets the *New York Times* seal of approval or not. I think there is always going to be innovative work done in New York by things like the Woosto group // etc. etc. but on the whole, no, innovative, I think it's a long journey. There was a wonderful article in the *New York Times* not long ago, about "Premieritis" - I think they were caling it – about regional theatres all want to do the Premier of new plays, those who do, do new plays and once its done in that theatre no other theatre will touch it and it's very sad because playwrights can't make a living if it's "no, no it has to be the premier. I am thinking of it as giving life to a play that deserves to be seen, so it's all about getting funding and you know you can get more for a premier, you can get a grant for that. You can't get a grant for doing a play someone else did the premier of, so occasionally it may get an other production, usually because a co-production has been agreed to beforehand. The only chance it gets to survive, a play, is if it gets done in New York. It gets the *New York Times* review and it has a bit of a run in New York, then everyone wants to do it. And sadly that's the way it works.

KS: Where you surprised that "Proof" was the longest running show of the decade?

TL: No, it was very cleverly marketed, I mean they kept brining in a leading lady who was well-known. I can't remember you played – I saw all of them and the second one, I can't remember. Anne Heche, I saw.

KS: And Jennifer Jason Lee.

TL: Jennifer Jason Lee - that's who it was. Simply awful. I mean she was, no wonder I can't remember, she was simply awful and Anne Heche, I think was the third one, I forget who was second and third, she was, well

she sounds like Minnie Mouse on stage, so she has a squeaky voice. So, but they were known, they were names, so they cleverly did that although they weren't great for the part. But it didn't seem to matter. I think that, it also, again, full proof middle prove quality to it that it convinces the audience that they have seen something very clever and very erudite and it aint. It is a good, conventional play but has it all those earmarks, it is about mathematics or it is about geniuses, therefore we are because we get it, you know. That's, it's very clever to write plays like that.

KS: Having spent all your live in New York and knowing theatre so well, do you remember or when was there a time when theatres could actually just survive of ticket sales, revenues without grants and investors who would never get their money back?

TL: Well, I have really no idea because I was a child when I was growing up so the business side really didn't interest me. I have travelled a great deal, so I have seen theatre all over Europe and definitely travelling as a regional theatre director also in this country but I – when did it start to change? I think it's interesting when you start to look at the, I did one time, there is a book out with all the Tony nominations for best play and best musical and if you look in the 1950s, at the nominations, there were sometimes so many good plays in one season, that were hits. I mean you run a hundred performances and made your money back that there sometimes had been six nominations where they have been years, where they were hard pressed to come up with four in the last 20 years. And where musicals sometimes they couldn't – there were only four musicals nominated in the Fifties – now there is an abundance of musicals. So it's all changed. I think it has become very Vegas in a lot of ways, as has the West End in London. The advantage of London is subsidized theatre, like the National and the Royal Court and the Royle Shakespeare and so forth. But I think it has become worse, definitely here, a big problem for me is Off-Broadway has changed so much. When I was growing up Off-Broadway really was tremendously exciting and even as a teenager and you could go see plays by Becket or Ian Ascot or brilliant revivals of O'Neil and Tennessee Williams and they were astounding and they set the standard and no one thought of moving them to Broadway because they

were meant to be in intimate houses. And there was a whole, if you look at what won the Pulitzers, there were a whole string of plays that really started off-Broadway and it became much more where all innovation took place and Broadway gradually became simply a market place. It started with the musical “Pipin”, which I think was done in the 70s, that there was a brilliant marketing campaign they did on the television of the opening number, it was theatrical but it had a very catchy tune to it. They had never done advertising in television before and it was so successful that it kept a show, that got mediocre reviews, running for several years. And it became a stable - many national tours and every theatre and every college did it and all that. So, that same kind of composers go to “Wicked”. That changed everything – television advertiser. And that strike I said in the mid 60s that killed the critics then took to television to give their reviews at, on the 11 o’clock news. They would rush from that theatre, that’S when reviews were actually written on opening night in 45 min, in a cab, getting you know to – that’s how reviews, they didn’t go to previews then. That television critics, so the force of television being used and then suddenly all these ex-sport writers go to see plays and start writing reviews on television, so the importance of television critics became important and they played the lowest common denominator, so they almost never reviewed plays, the almost always reviewed musicals or plays with stars in them, so all that started to shift and also with television advertising started taking many more American tourists and so consequently when you stand at the ticket line at, you know, 47th street – the half price booth, they is now a separate cue for if you want to see a play and not a musical. There is never anyone on that line, you can walk right but to that – the most I have seen is three people on it. Where the line for the musicals wraps around the square. And those are mostly tourists. And I understand why people who do not speak English want to see a drama and don’t want to see a musical; I totally understand that but Americans? Or Brits? And Australians? It’s sad but they, tourists do not go to see straight plays unless there is a huge star.

KS: What’s your experience with the Off-Off Broadway movement?

TL: Well that's where we all start, you know. Not much for years because one must make a living (Laugther). And I, you know, when there is and interesting play but you also have to make a living and pay for a health insurance in this country and things like that.

So, I haven't done off-off since the early 90s. I go to a fairly few because I think it's a one in a hit miss, sometimes absolute rubbish, other times it's terribly exciting what you see. And innovative but it's also just a new voice. The longer I live I realize there is very little innovation left under the sun, it's mostly been done. I mean a very funny comment to me was when I was directing at the English theatre in Berlin and I am going to a lot of German theatre, the state theatre that are now in mostly, what was east Berlin, and I was saying to him that I feel I am back in the 1970s, it's that type of theatre, that type of directors theatre that is, where the play is simply a launching pad for the genious of the director and actors are moved liked props, pieces of scenery around the stage and with absolutely no interest whether – I mean I saw, I have to say, a hilarious production of "Death of a Salesman" at the Staatsoper –

KS: Burgtheater?

TL: No, no, no in Berlin – Straßtheater?

KS: I know which one you mean.

TL: Deutsches Theater. I have actually – a play I've written, I am also a playwright, I actually did a send up about it, I mean talking about it, someone having seen the production, I didn't name the theatre. But it was "Death of a Salesman" with obviously competent actors but all the supporting roles where cut and cut. I mean Arthur Miller was still alive. I don't know how they got away with this. He probably did not know that this was going on and there were played 18, I remember counting them, all obviously young interns, 18 years of age in Mime sort of costumes, white faces and black leotards and black turtle neck and I thought, oh my God this is so 1969, and they are doing all sorts of movements that are weird as the play opens and this play is about how empty the American dream is and everyone screamed in it, there was sadomasochism in it for no reason whatsoever in a restaurant, it was absolutely a hauler, is the only way I can put it, I felt terrible for actors, all of them I clearly could see had talent

although they were asked to shout every single line. So it was one of the worst things I have ever seen and this was state money. There quite a few things that I have seen that were that bad, most of them I have to say in the German theatre. I don't mind directors theatre but been there, done that a long time ago. And when I said this to the director at the English theatre in Berlin, he laughed because he was a West Berliner and of course he had nothing but condescends for East Berlin as they still do, and he said when the wall came down they discovered all the theatre that happened while the wall was up so now they are reliving the 60s and 70s as if it was new, when there is nothing new about it, it was done and frankly as mentors then told me, what we were doing in the 60s and 70s, had been done decades before that as well, you see, in different disguises. So I don't really think there is such thing as innovation really.

KS: Not even Off-Off Broadway.

TL: No, I think what people are doing, the people who are doing it are young and think it's innovative and God bless them and I hope it is true. But I don't think there is this much innovation, when I look and I think, "well, I have seen this." They have never seen it. I think, unfortunately, innovation in playwriting is mostly for the bad, I think it is heavily influenced by film. So they can't write a complete scene, they write snippets, they write sound bites, they write the easiest part of the scene to write, the part you would see in the film trailer when it becomes a film, the one that would grab an audience. They can't write a beginning, a middle or the end of the scene. They can't write entrances or exits. It is the easiest playwriting in the world to do what they are doing. It's film and television writing. But to write a scene or even an entire act that is only a scene is remarkably difficult to do and that's writing for the stage.

KS: Which beautifully leads into the next line of questioning – my thesis is also about adaptation and to you, what makes a play, a play and a movie, a movie, what is for you the key difference or the key differences, can you describe this a little bit?

TL: Well, I think the theatre is more verbal than film. Which not to say theatre isn't visual, it is. I often refer to, when I am directing a play, even when it is a one-set play, as the camera is the audiences collective head,

heads, that I am moving it through my staging, through subtle light cues, all sorts of things, I tunnel where to look, always. I am very aware of that. They are not, they shouldn't be aware of that manipulation. You know, I saw a murder mystery recently that I directed in 1984, I saw a revival of it in which the Indians disappear. And there are tricks to making them disappear – you, famously the quote is from Tyrone Gutrhrie the great director, you drop a pile of logs. You make a commotion on one side of the stage as you pull away the Indians. It actually did happen but the audience didn't see it because you defected their vision, you do that on a more subtle scale all the time when you are staging with light cues. Sometimes you make them know, you do use a lot of techniques that the camera uses in a lot different ways as well. We do sometimes isolate what the audience is to see, as editing and point of view does in film. But film, by it's nature is less talk and that's why plays, rarely are they not severely cut and I think the ones that are not and really made more conducive to film are less successful.

KS: So how did you feel about "Proof" the adaptation?

TL: I thought the director made serious mistakes in chopping, because it goes back and forth in time, into the past and so forth – that he made it even more difficult to comprehend in chopping in up in editing style that was frenzy at times. And I thought, he thought because of the costumes that the various actors were wearing would put us into where we are meant to be whether present day or past. I think it only succeeded in confusing the audience enormously. I think he tried to open it up, which on some note was successful on the campus, I think having the final scene on the street is ridiculous. People would not be saying what they were saying in the middle of a residential street with obviously neighbours looking on or an earshot. The fact that there was no traffic on the street, no foot traffic made it even more silly. That needs to be in the back yard

I think the film of "Doubt" fails for a lot of the same reasons. The key scene in "Doubt", which also directed, is the scene where Mrs.Miller the mother comes to see Sister Aloysius, the principal, that must remain in the office that scene. It must be claustrophobic. The terror of a black woman in 1964, very unusual to be catholic and indeed she may not have been,

because they wanted to put her son into a catholic school to get a better education and get disciplined. In New York they were better school, and disciplined. The fact the moved that scene outdoors, along the street as they are walking destroyed the scene despite the fact they had two wonderful actors, I thought Meryl Streep had overacted, I thought Violet Davis was superb as the mother, they killed the performance, they killed it by moving that outside and having snow and all that around and shivering. Absolutely dreadful mistake, it destroyed the most dramatic scene in the play. There are scenes in the play they could have moved but that scene what the play is about. I think it fails as a film because it so stage bound.

KS: And in "Proof".

TL: Both "Doubt" and "Proof" I think are stage bound places, I don't think they work on camera. I think there were some really good performances –

KS: In "Proof"?

TL: I think Gwyneth Paltrow was good, I thought Hope Davis was really good although she did not overcome the annoying character, the irritating parts of that character, which I think the fault of the writer. I think he got cheap shots of that character, I think it's a two dimensional character. She found some humanity, I think there is more there I think she is a terrific actress, I think she should have been permitted to find more. Gwyneth Paltrow was very good. Jake Gyllenhall was clearly younger than Gwyneth Paltrow, I thought that was odd. I never bought him as the nerdy mathematician, I like him as an actor but not in that part. Anthony Hopkins, I haven't seen an interesting performance from in years to be honest he bores the living // out of me, I mean I remember him as a young stage actor in London, I've liked him in a lot of things, I think he is a muddle of mannerisms and he mumbles and growls a lot. So I wasn't keen on it, I didn't like how the director, how he tried to open it up, I thought that was mistake. I think basically it's a play, it's so verbal that you are trying to constantly find visual excitement to something that is not meant to have visual excitement. And in doing that you reduced the play and I think the play came of as less than it did on stage. The first act curtain where she reveals that she wrote the proof, Catherine, is a great curtain, I think it's fissile but none the less a brilliant curtain. There was a hubbub in the

theatre, people came running back for the second act, it was a great grabber. There is no curtain, obviously and it is written as a curtain in the play, so the moment went by as “Ah, you know, okay” it lacked all excitement. So to me the play is written to build and the scene that is so terribly touching with the father, when he is clearly half mad and he is out in the winter cold in the back yard, working on his proofs and Catherine discovers what he is written raves. That is a terribly moving scene and when I directed it I thought this is clearly a deeply touching scene, I thought that was a very nice piece of writing. By breaking that up into at least three different times that we come back to it, rather than letting the scene play out, the director destroyed the power and the enormous depth of empathy that we have for both of them by trying to desperately make the play cinematic.

KS: You said earlier that plays have to be cut to work on film.

TL: Too many words.

KS: Do you feel that “Proof” a) do you feel very faithful to the play, b) what do you think should have been done to the play to make it work on film?

TL: Well again, I am not sure it’s meant to be done on film. I mean obviously it’s good that it does, it gets out to a wider public and the playwright makes a lot of money and is able to write other things because of the movie sells.

I think that sometimes that the straightforward and best adaptations of a play to film, there are three that I can think of, there is a great movie in the early 1940s of a great American play called “The little foxes” by Lilly Helman. It was made into the spectacular, successful film by the great film director William Wyler starring Betty Davis in one of her greatest performances because she was restrained. William Wyler was a very tough director and he restrained her and consequently all that volcanic energy was pushed in and it was an indelible performance and he also brought in most of the original Broadway cast. He did very moving it outdoors; most of the play was shot in settings. He moved things into bedrooms, where you heard only voices or what had happened in that bedroom. Mostly it was kept to the parlour and the foyer as is the play. He really had one of the great cinematographers, Greg Tolland who really

with that film made deep focus, it was considered one of the first great uses of deep focus, that he made it sometimes by beautifully letting, never calling attention to it itself camera movement, he made the camera move but also Wyler was genius at staging, so without looking it stagy lots of movement happened even within a frame though camera standing still, so he knew how to move actors. So he was a great director of actors, most directors in film today know nothing about acting, couldn't stage an acting moment to safe their lives. They only know camera movement and that is their only answer to every single shot, they don't get acting and they don't get how to arrive at performances. They have no theatrical experience but all those great film directors did. Another example is "Who is afraid of Virginia Wolfe" directed by the great American director Mike Nichols, who is still very alive. The movie had all sorts of Oscar nominations, Elisabeth Taylor actually deservedly won for a shockingly brilliant performance but he, it was his first film. He then went on to win an Oscar for "The Graduate" his second film. But he adapted it and he barely ever moved it out of the house. He superbly moved a scene between the two men outdoors and little moments to the backyard but of course it's after midnight and you wouldn't see other people and it's, you know, New England and a large back yard. And then there was a moment when they went to a roadside dinner, a roadside dinner and because it was so late there was no one else there, which was great. That wasn't bad but for the most part it remained exactly where the play takes place, in the living room, 80% of the film takes place there and again with brilliant Haskell Wexler, a great cinematographer, black and white, which was very clever in a time when almost no films have been made black and white, he was perfect leaving it black and white, he made it much more gritty. And a great cinematographer, one of the best and movement of the camera made the exciting and you thought that it was great. And the third one was a British director, who just died, apparently a year ago, David Jones, I had met, adapted the play "Betrayl", which I have just directed, Harold Pinter play, and I thought he made that cinematic but he for the most part, he kept, virtually, in fact, entirely he kept all of the scene in the setting that is in the play. Now, that play has multiple locals, so that helps a little bit

opening it up, so if you are in the restaurant, you actually see the restaurant, you see people entering from the street, you have an idea of their neighbourhood but beyond that he basically shot the play. He had interesting camera movement that didn't call attention to it but he hired great actors and actors moved within a frame, it never looked stagy, never, not for a minute stagy. So my advice is, stop trying to make it ultra cinematic, shot the plays, find ways to open it up but don't do it just to open it up but if it for a moment looks like it is going to wreck the scene as it did say with that scene with Mrs. Miller and Sister Aloysius in Doubt ruined, ruined the best scene the best scene in the play, then you have made a serious mistake. I think sometimes leave it alone.

KS: And move the camera instead of move the people?

TL: Move the people within the frame, learn how to stage, learn how to stage! Without it being excessively stagy. And the Staginess is in the acting, if the actor doesn't have that much film experience and are playing to a balcony that isn't there. If they are subtle and understand the workings of a camera or if the director is saying less, less, less and the importance of the eyes and just facial expressions and the subtlety of it, yes but then move them in that frame, that's where the action happens. That's what William Wyler brilliant illustrated in, and Vincent Canby a great film critic of the *New York Times*, not just my opinion, I did feel that way and I loved that he wrote that in print, shortly before he died, it came out on DVD, this is the finest adaptation of a play ever done for the screen. And it is and it is basically left alone but the use of deep focus was brilliant which is now common vocabulary, still always used, over used by directors, who have no idea what they are doing, look how he and Greg Tolland are doing it in "Little Foxes", it's meant to be done that way. Now they do it just to draw attention to the fact, oh look we are using deep focus. It's full of directors, film and television, who have come out of commercials, especially the Brits, and it's all about showing off, showing their technique rather than doing the material. John Madden, who directed "Proof" and "Shakespeare in Love" was a stage director and should know better but I think sometimes stage directors feel they have to prove that they are cinematic like Rob Marshall in Chicago and I haven' seen it, "Nine", it's over edited,

over shot, over produced but no those three films, look at those three films and that's great adaptation of theatre to film.

KS: So do you feel the movie stayed faithful to the play?

TL: Is it "Proof"?

KS: Yeah.

TL: Sure, it stayed faithful to it.

KS: How do you feel about, that the greatest success, even if it is just financially, a play can ever have if it is turned into a movie? What does it mean for theatre itself? What does it mean for playwriting?

TL: I am not sure I understand your question.

KS: If the greatest success a play can ever have, even if it is just financial success, is a movie, what does that mean for theatre itself, does it just become a vehicle for movies?

TL: Right. Oh no, most plays don't get made into movies actually. I think that has always been true since there have been talkies, even before that when the silents – they have always adapted plays to the screen and that has not damaged the theatre in that sense. No, I think it just brings the play to a wider audience. I think rarely is the play as good or rather is the film as good - "A man for all seasons" is one where, I saw both on stage and on screen, I thought the screen adaptation was actually better than it was on stage but that's rare. So I am not sure I understand what you mean, does it affect it in a negative way, does it hurt it?

KS: I feel it makes me question theatre as an independent art form, if the next step in the evolution is a movie. A great play, it's a success, let's turn it into a movie.

TL: Well, yeah it's just money making and sometimes it helps the play in the sense, a lot of times the shows are a bigger hit after the movie is come and gone. "Chicago" for example ran for years after the movie came and went and often times it helps it even more. I think sometimes it draws attention to the play and the play has more of a life. I think for example the film, say "Doubt" or "Proof" brought the play to other people, so consequently other theatres, community theatres, university theatres will now do that, where they will not have done the play beforehand that sometimes I think it gives more life to the play.

KS: So you don't feel the play becomes obsolete once it's a movie?

TL: On the contrary it keeps it in the public's mind.

KS: Would you consider selling your rights to one of the plays that you have written?

TL: Of course, sure and I want Meryl Streep to play every role.

KS: Have you ever considered working in TV or film?

TL: As a director or as a writer?

KS: Either way.

TL: No, I haven't really. I think, I am 63, so from a different generation. Oh sorry I am pushing myself, I am 63 next month but I feel like I am almost there. I grew up in New York in what is called the end of the golden age of Broadway but also Off-Broadway when it was really given birth, when it was exciting. So New York really was a theatre town, it still is but even more so when I was a child. Film was, television was considered wonderfully silly and you got your news. In New York it was actually a fantastic time because there were seven television stations in New York, in the 1950s, nowhere else in the world had that many television stations. And three of them had a huge amount of old films and a lot of them, European films, subtitled. Can you imagine in the 1950s? Only in New York. So I saw Fellini, you know, on television subtitled, I saw "Nights of Cabiria" when I was maybe a freshman in High School, it was amazing you know. And all these British comedies that we used to see. New York was extraordinary town to grow up in but it was a theatre town, that was the great art form. The great performance art from was theatre and my dream was always to work in the theatre. And I love going to movies, I rarely watch television, unless "The Sopranos" and various things I love but and the news of course but less and less of that even. But, no, it never held that type of excitement that theatre does, it still doesn't.

KS: Are you aware that TV and Film keep theatre alive in terms of employing the people who are in theatre?

TL: Oh sure, yeah. So does restaurants. I mean most waiters in New York are actors. There are all sorts of ways you make a living; I don't think actors who have five lines in "Law & Order" consider that one of their great moments of acting, do they like that pay check at television? Absolutely.

Does it allow them to stay in New York and do what they really want to do, which is theatre? Unquestionably. So do many survival jobs.

KS: What have your survival jobs been over the years?

TL: Of course I haven't had to do them in many, many years but like everyone I've waited tables. Well, I've started as an actor before I was a director. Since I have started directing, rare. I try to remember, I may have worked in an art gallery but it was part-time when I first started as a director, for the first three years and the third year I had a play that was off-off Broadway but fortunately a lot of people came to see it because of the subject matter about the Irish famine called "Famine" and it had a huge cast. Tiny little stage and I had 26 actors and 95 rejections and it was a very breathtaking production and it got noticed from the press and I suddenly started working and I haven't had a survival job since then, that 1982.

KS: Is it also because you are still, and you mentioned this to me in a different conversation, that you are still of generation where you can survive as an artist in New York?

TL: Well because I have what is called rent stabilisation, so I have a much lower rent. I live in one, what is considered one the expensive neighbourhoods. It wasn't when I moved in to it. There is no causality there, it wasn't because I moved in, I can assure you. The fact that I can hang on to my apartment is a wonderful thing that we have in New York, is rent stabilisation, so I have kept my apartment now 29 years.

KS: Wow.

TL: But in a neighbourhood everyone wants to live in – the Upper West Side, so I have on the bottom of my street, half a block away is River Side Park; a few blocks away the other direction is central park. I mean it's just a wonderful place.

KS: So actually the rent difference makes a huge difference in you being able to survive of theatre?

TL: Totally. Absolutely. Or what has sadly happened is- when I first moved to his neighbourhood, I used to see there, there used to be a lot of dance studios up here and all that. So I used to see dancers coming down with their dance bags and their pigeon toed walk, you could spot dances two

blocks away, there were also a couple acting schools, so you saw young actors running about. You saw lots of show people lived here, also a lot of writers, Josa Heller used to live around the corner from me, people like that. He would simply be on the street, we were like “uh” – that’s gone. There are almost no one, there are no dance studios, no acting schools, all that’s gone. It has become totally gentrified or yuppies moved in, it is now a very wealthy area and it’s a little sad. What is wonderful is I could walk to the theatre district, which I always did. 30 blocks but that is a great healthy walk in New York and people watching is fantastic. And you would run into people constantly, every time you would walk to and from the theatre district, you would run into people constantly. I run into occasionally friends now who are not necessarily in the theatre or in the arts at all, you just don’t run into them anymore. They are gone from here now, they have moved way out, you know, in the outer boroughs.

KS: Why didn’t they have rent stabilised apartments?

TL: No, once you move out, they can raise rent. And because of the turn over sometimes, people move, they get married and because of the turn over they were able to raise it a lot each time, that now, a studio apartment in this neighbourhood goes for, a studio, a small, little box, goes for two to 2500 Dollars a month rental, a single room.

KS: Do you feel your career could still possibly lead to film or TV?

TL: Oh no, no, no. First of all in film and television language 62 going to be 63 sounds like 200 you know, I mean there is no respect for age or wisdom in film or television, there isn’t, at all. You are considered an old fogy, an old hat, in fact you are at 40 or 45 unless you have had huge success. At the theater you are considered to be wiser and even better at what you do and frankly I am. Because now writing plays, people start asking me if I want to stop directing and I say no, I can never do that. I would miss the company of actors and also the acting process to me is more fascinating now than ever and I am also better at it than I have ever been before. I think it is one of those professions as you get older and wiser and more life experience and have dealt with such a variety of people you are just so much better at it, why would you want to stop that? They will have to carry me out, I will refuse to go but I do want to spend at

least half my time writing as well. I do want to do less directing but that's not because I don't want to be directing, it's because I can't write and direct at the same time.

KS: Last question – do you feel that Daniel Sullivan is one of the most important directors of American theater today?

TL: What an odd question.

KS: Because he directed "Proof".

TL: Oh I see, yes he is definitely one of the most important directors. The thing I like about Dan's work is that he is very, very good at directing these small plays that require in depth acting. I think he is good with the writers and I think he is good with actors. That's classic American theater, classic theater to begin with, classic Greek theater.

KS: Right, thank you very much.

TL: Absolutely.

END OF INTERVIEW.

Interview mit Linda Winer vom 19. Februar 2010 – geführt und transkribiert von Katharina Sporrer

Katharina Sporrer: So my first question is how did you initially become a jury member fort he Pulitzer Prize?

Linda Winer: Okay, you get picked by the people in the Pulitzer office. The very first time I was a Pulitzer jurist was years and years ago and I didn't know any of the current people. That was, think, I think I have been on the jury eight times and I've been a chair, I think five times.

KS: So you don't know who appointed you?

LW: The original time I was just called.

KS: You don't know who suggested you?

LW: The first time no. After that, I mean, I work now pretty, you know, closely with Syd, I am sure you have met the people at the Pulitzer office.

KS: No, I haven't met them.

LW: Oh really, okay. Syd and Bud you know these names though.

KS: Yes I have read about the administration office.

LW: Yeah, so the people at the administration office choose the panles and you just get a call out of the blue and they invite you.

KS: How did you become the chair?

LW: They asked me to do it. There is usually five people on the panels, previously it was five journalists, a lot of the time. But now they are trying, the last – I am not good at –

KS: Four years.

LW: Four years, okay, they have a writer and an academic.

KS: Actually longer than that, I think *Proof* was the last one where there was no writer involved.

LW: Oh okay.

KS: And after that they tried to –

LW: Yeah. You have this little book though?

KS: This little book?

LW: This little book I brought you.

KS: We are eating and talking.

LW: Yes, we are eating and talking.

KS: What is the process like, could you describe that to me?

LW: The number of plays, scripts are sent to us during the years. Also the panelists tend to have a geographical spread. So there will someone who is sort seeing everything on the west coast and someone in the Midwest, who is keeping an eye on things. So if something happens in that area of the country, they can either call the office or the chair and email them and say "hey I just saw ruined in Chicago, this looks like this could be something, you better email, let's get somebody over here to look at it and make sure that we get script" then also there are entries, anybody in that year can enter a script to be considered so I am sure that comes through the Pulitzer office. So we make suggestions to the Pulitzer office of things that we think should see, should get scripts.

KS: Before they have been entered?

LW: Things we see that we don't know if they have been entered or not but we just say that is something we should get a script for. And then otherwise there is other things that just come into the office there. It's pretty bland (the soup we were eating), isn't it? We didn't mean the play. And so you get a pile of scripts that sometimes is 70 or 80 scripts. And sometimes you get them through the year and you are able to read them as you go along. But those of us, who are deadline workers and that includes the people at the Pulitzer office tend to get a lot of them right before the judging and then you binge read. And it depends, the prize is supposed to go the play, the script it selves but it is silly to think that the production, if we have seen the production, doesn't have an impact. For example there was a year that the Margret Edson play "Wit" have been submitted –

KS: It was 199- it was in the late 1990s. 1999 actually that in won.

LW: It won in 1999 but it was also submitted in 1998.

KS: That was when Paula Vogel's "How I learned to drive" won?

LW: Let's see. I was on both.

KS: I think it was 1999.

LW: "How I learned to drive" was 1998 and "Wit" was 1999.

KS: Right.

LW: And what we did – "Wit" did not even make the finalists in 98. We read it and nobody was all that impressed and it didn't make any impact. Then it opened and we saw it and we were very impressed. So we asked the office if we could be flexible and reconsider it, now that we have seen it.

KS: Wow.

LW: Because you know it's very arbitrary what year things are. Did you follow that up until fairly recently the cut off point, the eligibility was March 1st to the end of February. Which I am pleased to say that I was part of the getting it changed to the calendar year. The reason that everything else on the Pulitzer is calendar year but this because the Pulitzer board meets, because of the schedule of the Pulitzer board, they kept the eligibility quite arbitrary from March 1st to the end of February, it didn't make any sense. And so we changed it to calendar year, which was the first year was a little hard because we only had 10 months. And it's frustrating because if things open now, say something has opened this winter, this spring that seems like something the board might want see, it's not eligible until next year, so it takes some of the timeliness away from it, it does make it at least more logical because what happens – what was frustrating with a cut of at the end of February there was interesting things in theater happening in March and they couldn't be considered but if they opened in February they could be considered, you see.

KS: Yeah.

LW: So it was completely, no matter where you made that cut off there were things left out in an arbitrary way and so if you are going have a prescribed time you may as well make it calendar year and so we've done and I think it's better.

KS: It's more clear.

LW: Yes. So we get this pile of plays and we read all of them. Some of them would have opened in New York, so there is a good chance I would have seen it and if it is still running the people who have come out of town will go and see them but the judging is basically on the script.

KS: Do you try to go and see regional plays yourself?

LW: There was a budget at some point, if something had opened in Minapolis that the critic from Chicago, the Pulitzer would pay for the critic from Chicago to go and check it out. They couldn't pay for all five of us to go. But eligibility means it has to have opened somewhere in America that year. When we are lucky it has also moved to New York. Process, you want to more about process?

KS: So you try to see as many productions as you can, you read as many plays as you can but obviously you can't read all of the ones that are sent in.

LW: Yeah, we do.

KS: So you read all of them?

LW: I really do.

KS: Wow.

LW: I really do. I mean this is somebody's life's works. And this is a prize – if any prize is supposed to have integrity, this one is and I think that when I sign on for it, I read all the plays. You know, some of them you can skim because you know you read the first pages, you don't think you necessarily have to go through the whole thing but I skim it though but I wont -

KS: Let go of it totally.

LW: No.

KS: That's great. So during the process, who do you communicate to? As you are reading the plays who are allowed to communicate to about your thoughts?

LW: During the year, no one is allowed to know who the panelists are, so there can't be any cohesion or attempted cohesion to get a Pulitzer judge in there. Being in New York, I see every important play any way that at least opens in New York.

KS: Do you see Off-Off Broadway as well sometimes?

LW: I see selectively Off-Off Broadway, there is no way to keep up but if something opens and there is enough attention on it and it sounds like something that deserves a look, I will but I am only – we used to have a large staff at my paper and now have – I am the only one. So anything that I don't see, doesn't get seen.

KS: How many times a week do you go to the theater?

LW: I would say it averages out to about five a week.

KS: Wow.

LW: During slow times it may be viewer and during the heat of the seaon it's every day.

KS: During the Pulitzer year – because I tried to find something you wrote about "Proof" and for some reason I wasn't able to find anything in the system – but during that year, do you consider the way you phrase thing specifically because you are on the jury or do you not write about the plays?

LW: I mean I review them. Were you looking for my review?

KS: Yeah.

LW: I did review it and I may not be all that useful for your paper because I didn't really like the play very much.

KS: That's fine.That's absolutely fine.

LW: It was not my personal choice. I am trying to remember, I believe, it is the chair that writes the report. We pick three finalists –

KS: Yeah, it was "The play about the baby" and "The Weveryl Gallery".

LW: The chair writes the recommendations but we are not – you have to put them in alphabetical order not in order of your personal choice of the committee, the board doesn't want to know that.

KW: So "Auburn" was –

LW: I can't remember if it was – if it's, I would have get back to my reports.

KW: Is it the title that's alphabetical or?

LW: I am not sure, I can't really remember, I would have to check.

KW: Okay that would be interesting.

LW: But whatever it is you can't say choice 1, 2 and 3. You used to be able but you can't now.

KW: But can't you usually feel in the report which one is the favorite?

LW: We are not supposed to and from what I understand the board, I don't understand the board, don't like it if it is and I don't think it really affects them, pushes them one way or the other. We usually do – it's hard not just by the choice of words making it clear in the descriptions but that is really

not our job. Our job is to pick the three finalists and explain why they are finalists.

KS: But to get back to the question – in the years that you are on the board you do your reviews just as you would in any other year?

LW: Yeah, absolutely.

KS: Has anyone ever tried to bribe you thinking that you will be in the committee

LW: No, but I think it was Oscar Wilde who said I think critics can be bought, from the looks of them they can't be very expensive. No, there is much less of that than you like to believe from Hollywood movies.

KS: How do you view the board and its role and its power and its importance and its opinion?

LW: I think the board has an awesome responsibility, I think that, I know that they are journalists. They are editors and publishers. And there are times when its very frustrating and you know that journalists – people who are not really theater people make the decisions and sometimes it doesn't the way we wanted it as a panel. Sometimes the board decides to not give an award because they decide –

KS: Like in 2006.

LW: Yeah and that was a really hard year, I was a chair that year. And it was a really hard year, there were lots and lots of plays and some of them were extremely interesting but there was no clear – the easiest years are when suddenly there is a clear Pulitzer play, something just comes out and it is head and shoulders above everything and you just know, this has to be considered. On the years, the really hard years are ones when you really have to comb through everything and we came up with three plays that we were proud of and comfortable with even though there wasn't anything that clearly said Pulitzer on it and it is quiet discouraging then to find out that they have rejected them all. But that's the system. I can't imagine, what is it 18 people –

KS: Around 20-

LW: Around 20 people. The amount of work they have to comb through. All the journalism prizes, multi –part investigative series and things like that and still make decisions on what we call "letters". The strangest one I

think is that they can make a decision on classical music, it must be really hard. Because a lot of these things are even, the committee reads scores. That is the award -

KS: It's like a different language.

LW: It falls most between the cracks in terms between the gap what the board may understand about the art form. With theater, theater really straddles, it is an art and it is an entertainment. I think everyone thinks they are a theatre critic, you know. I think it becomes not as daunting a task as making the decisions about some of the others but for the most part they trust their jury, their committees. Not only do they have the right to not give an award but they also have the right to go outside the suggestions, the finalists and pick something else entirely. That never happened on my watch but it happened.

KS: Is there a possibility that you could ever be a board member?

LW: I don't really think so. They are people from really high up the hierarchy of newspapers and I don't think that I would even feel comfortable to do it. I think – you have seen how many awards they give a year. I was on the journalism committees two times in the early 80s and my husband is on the criticism panel this year, committee this year and last year, he is a classical music – he has a Pulitzer Prize.

KS: He has a what?

LW: He has a Pulitzer Prize. There is a Pulitzer Prize hanging in his bathroom but there is no Pulitzer hanging in my bathroom.

KS: Not yet.

LW: Well, now that my reviews are 375 words apiece. I don't think so. That picture caption doesn't make it, I can say that.

LW: You have seen the people who are on it – editors, publishers, managing editors, star columnists -

KS: Upper class, journalists, white, older, mostly.

LW: I don't know about it.

KS: It looked like it. White males in their 40s, 50s.

LW: That's not something that I would say. I didn't – I haven't seen the list now but there are many more women in upper abhors of daily journalism.

Newsday has a woman editor, our editor in chief is a woman and our managing editor is a woman. But maybe traditionally in the old day -

KS: On the Pulitzer Prize board it's really – I think the most was three women in one year and usually it is only two non-white people. That Is only the Pulitzer Prize board.

LW: That's the board, that's what we are talking about. I don't know. Do you know who is on now?

KS: This year, no, I wouldn't specifically know their papers. But they always put a photo down so you can really see how the look and how old they are.

LW: Well, that's what it takes to get there. Not that it takes to be white and male but you tend to be a little older.

KS: Of course, yeah.

LW: But I will defend the rights of people getting older not be dismissed –

KS: No, no, no I was just saying that it's really one group of people – white males over forty - usually. I didn't mean to make it sound dismissive, that is just the way it is.

LW: I know.

(Talk about the cheese on the plates)

KS: I mean you have done a lot of stuff concerning women and theater. That ratio of the board, isn't that a little disappointing?

LW: If it is representative of the people, who are running newspapers, then that is the disappointing part. Not that it is disappointing that that is the Pulitzer Board but that that is who is running newspaper. That is not Pulitzers fault.

KS: Well Joseph Pulitzers maybe.

(laugther)

LW: In terms of the board I really don't know. Once it's out of my hands, then I sit there just like everybody else and wait to find out which one.

KS: How would you describe the importance of the Pulitzer Prize in the theater world? And you can also compare it to other prizes.

LW: I think it's a great prize. When you get the Pulitzer that is the headline in your obituary. Al through journalism and everything and has a cache that a lot of other awards don't have. Is it always as untarnished as we

would like? No, but there are human beings making the decisions. And the arts unlike a Olympic race, it is not just a clear cut idea who is on the finish line first.

KS: It is subjective, always.

LW: Yes.

KS: How do you feel it compares to other prizes? And how does it compare to other prizes that you have actually been part of? And the Tony as well.

LW: Tonys are an industry prize, just specifically with the commercial theater. If the Pulitzer would only concern themselves with Broadway, most of the plays that won would have been disqualified, would have not been considered.

KS: That's great.

The Tony awards are specifically Broadway. So the idea of commercial success is probably more important. And it is about money; the Tonys are about money. And the Pulitzers, while the end result is money and prestige, I think that there is an integrity in the process that maybe can be faulted from specific to specific but no in general.

KS: I mean you really do read every play that comes in.

LW: Yeah, every play that is submitted and every play that we suggest. So it is whatever is submitted plus whatever one of the members has given everybody else a heads up – you know have I seen that one, I heard about that, you should really take a look at that. It is endless; it is grueling. I mean it's fun.

(another glass of wine)

KS: How do you feel as a jury member with all that power in your hands knowing that whoever wins, it will be that kind of life change to them?

LS: Well, just as when I sit down to write a review, I don't think about what the review might mean to the artist, you really can't think about that. You really just have to think about, which in my mind is the most deserving. That may sound ridiculously naïve and idealistic but there are some plays given their naturalistic style, more obviously Pulitzer plays, that everybody knows and quotes, speak to a kind of main stream audience but it is not always true. The Puitzer were discredited, you know the history with "Who

is afraid of Virginia Wolfe?" and you know the New York drama critics circle was established in reaction to the Pulitzers but I think the process - I can't speak for other times – is as clean as I can imagine it being. We want to pick the things we like and sometimes the deliberations get quite rockers. Plus you got five different people making these decisions and these are serious decisions and to my knowledge I have never had anybody on any of the committees who didn't take it seriously. Have you ever – you know on jury duty. You know you take people and they know this is important and there is an integrity in it and we are experts and we are also citizen experts.

KS: What does "Pulitzer Prize worthy" mean? What does Pulitzer Prize play is? What does a Pulitzer Prize entail. Besides being an American play by an American writer.

LW: Yeah, about supposedly American themes but that is very loose too. For example last year with "Ruined" which is about Africa and what's going on in the Congo.

KS: Or "I am my own wife."

LW: I was on that one too, I think. But if it is by an American playwright processed for an American audience, I think it is American enough. I don't get hysterical over whether it is about or not American themes, everything doesn't have to be Shenandoah– how boring that would be. The question that often comes up and I think this is a hard question – are we finding the best, the most worthy play of that year or the Pulitzer winner of that year. For example when the board rejected all three that year because they didn't think anything was Pulitzer worthy, well our assignment is to find the three best out of the pile of 70, 80 plays.

KS: That is roughly 70, 80 plays you read through year?

LW: Yeah. And so it's not just – I don't think about is this a Pulitzer Prize winning play but how does it compare to the other plays of that year. The two real grey areas is that the best play, is not always such a thing as a Pulitzer play. Some years it's clear – "Angeles in America" is clear. And the other grey area is, are you deciding on the basis of the play or the production.

KS: Right.

LW: But it is really supposed to be on the script.

KS: Were there plays that you really liked and you thought they would never have a chance with the board? That you just knew, even though you liked them, just wouldn't go anywhere for some reason.

LW: I think when you think about – I don't know if I should be saying this –

KS: Please do, it's only for my thesis, I am not going to write an article about it. You are using your chewing time to think about it!

LW: I am using my chewing time to think about it. Last year one of our finals was "In the Heights" and in my head I had a conflict in myself between "In the Heights" and "Passing Strange", which was another American Musical that was on Broadway last year. And I came down, although I believed that "Passing Strange" was more original, I think "In the Heights" spoke to a larger audience and is more conventional in not just a bad way that it was – and I really loved both of them and it was a hard decision for me to come down on the edge of the cutting edge more original one or the one that has a lot of originality in it but is basically a conventional musical. "In the Heights" was the first musical about Hispanics written by a Hispanic, as opposed to "West Side Story" and "Passing Strange" is a very odd, hybrid musical by a black rock-jazz old music singer/songwriter Stew and the show was sort of a biographical coming of age show that combined story telling techniques and traditional story telling with elements of a rap concert and I probably loved "Passing Strange" more but I am so fond of "In the Heights" and I think "In the Heights" in that way, if I can possibly say this without making it sound – it's more of a Pulitzer play, you know. It would be better understood by the people making the decisions.

KS: That is a very honest answer. And you could only put one down because you already had the other -?

LW: We already had two, other which was "Ruined", and I don't remember now.

KS: Do you feel that Pulitzr Prize shapes the publics opinion, that it very much focuses the way American theater is viewed – this is good theater, this is good quality theater?

LW: It would be nice because we try to keep it that way. But the thing is there is a number of times that the play has already closed or never even played in New York or were on for a while and disappeared. It is not like it cannot affect the box office and in that way there is a kind of purity to it to. It is not like we pick something because more people would go to it. I think, you look back, there have been a number of bloopers through the year but I think given that years state – I am not answering your question but it is not for a lack of trying.

KS: Let me rephrase the question so you can see what I mean – for example when the plays are published they already come out with the sticker "Pulitzer Prize" winning play and even for me and I have obviously read a lot of plays now in the process and I have read many more winners naturally but even if it wasn't for that – it is right away for any person wanting to know anything about American theater, the "Pulitzer Prize" means automatically, that one is probably better.

LW: Maybe. I don't know. I think it probably makes it easier for that play to get a production. I am sure of that. I am sure a lot of regional theaters would say lets produce the Pulitzer play, so the market place I know these things have an affect but you are not saying not just market place but what decides when you look back –

KS: It feels like those who didn't win are almost gone – there are so many new plays coming each year and the few of them that win are remembered and the rest –

LW: That is only if you live in a win or loosing culture, which is I guess is what we are but there are so many wonderful things that never win anything or have never been finalists for anything that it is still arbitrarily. There is no right answer that comes out and holds the gold metal.

KS: Who is a writer for you, who has really not been appreciated by the Pulitzer Prize so far? Is there one that you can think of, who has really been ignored so far but you find absolutely great?

LW: I don't say.

KS: Fair enough. There is one American playwright that everybody keeps mentioning but his name has slipped my mind completely.

LW: Oh I would love to know.

KS: Even Tony Kushner mentioned his name. He wrote a lot of movies as well. It is on the tip of my tongue but I can't remember it.

LW: Robert Bates?

KS: George. Hmh. Really famous playwright. I can see the cover of one.

LW: Richard Greenberg.

KS: It will probably come to me.

LW: Email me.

KS: If not I will email you because he came up in a lot of things I have read because he is the one playwright of who Tony Kushner said when he saw his work, he was the first playwright he thought of "I want to write like that" and I forgot his name.

LW: And he has been ignored. I would be really interested who that was.

KS: I am sorry.

LW: It's okay. I mean you look at the Oscars, you look at everything and there are a lot of people who have never won anything, who you think would have. It's very arbitrary. Look if five wonderful things open that year and we can only pick three and then the board can only pick one – what about those other two? Or those other 20 but then there are other years when you just go "eh".

KS: Do you feel some plays when you read them or when you seen them – obviously you have read so many that didn't make any cut that some of them were intentionally written for the Pulitzer board, trying to –

LW: No. I think it is so hard to write a play and it is so hard to get a play produced – there is no way to presume that if you have these five elements that it will catch the eye, I just can't imagine that it could be that calculated. I think it is too hard, if you be this easy. What is your feeling, do you see, when you look at the list, does it strike you that there are some similarities that are depressing or Susan Mary Parks really cutting edge "Top Dog/Under Dog".

KS: No, honestly, obviously "Angeles in America" and "Ruined" were really cool plays and were not that conventional for sure.

LW: There are some plays that I certainly – they are not things that I have voted for.

KS: Generally I have enjoyed the plays; it's just questioning the process.

LW: And everyone is always second-guessing them, that's part of it. It is a spectator's sport.

KS: To me what irks me the most about the Pulitzer is so often mentioned, mostly in things about the Pulitzer, but that is mentioned in relation to the Nobel Prize and that's to me, that is not quite far because the Nobel Prize is a world prize and the Pulitzer is just the United States and to put that on the same level, is to me as an European person makes it very cheeky.

LW: Yes, and provincial.

KS: Yes, a little bit. I think it would be more interesting if it would be

LW: a world prize.

KS: Yes.

LW: It would be horribly impossible. If you could imagine!. And it would have been something that is not administered through America. And the languages. It would be daunting. If you could come up with a winner every five years that would be an accomplishment.

KS: I agree. In general I think it's difficult in any way, it is always subjective, you know.

LW: I mean there have been times when I look and think: that's so easy, that is too easy. And that's the thing I see sometimes that it can be the things that are the most accessible, the easiest to understand but there has been a real track record with things that go against that assumption, that prejudice – "oh this is all white bread, mainstream, made for TV stuff", some of them are.

KS: So this year, I don't know if you are on the panel or not, you are not allowed to tell obviously –

LW: I am not allowed to tell.

KS: So if you are or if you are not, can you usually guess which play wins as you go through the season and watch them.

LW: Some years yes, some years no. I mean I could look back on the calander year – I am not on it this year – and I think I could pick the three that I would pick.

KS: Tell me.

LW: I have not seen things in the regional theater that have not opened here.

(talk about the spoons on the table)

My choices might been a little eccentric this year, as I have not read what everybody has read. I would pick Ann Deavere Smith's – what is called – her latest one "Let me down easy". I think it is Anna's turn. There is a tendency to not give to a one person play. "I am my own wife" was a real exception. And I think also, and I am only guessing now, because she writes her plays based on interviews that it is more conceived more as journalism than creative writing.

KS: That was one of the reasons she did not get it before, why she was not nominated.

LW: She was nominated on one them – I can't remember if it was "Fires in the mirror" or "Twilight LA".

KS: With one of them that was the point.

LW: That was the point and I think that is bogus. I think that is a silly think – she makes original theater out of things people say but so does David Mamet.

KS: So does everybody.

LW: Yeah. So I would have picked - and that can't be, it doesn't really matter, I am not on it this year but I am still very much in touch with the people in the office. But I can't be on it every year, you know I told them it may be time to retire my jersey, my number. I love doing it but they need to spread around.

KS: That's nice and maybe you wanted to have a little bit more time for yourself this year.

LW: No, you know I think it's correct that it not be centralized and it is sort of fluke that I have done as many as I have and I still am always available for the office to ask things. I love a play by Kenneth Lonergan called "Starry Messenger" that has been off-Broadway with Matthew Broderick and people either loved it or thought it was the most boring thing that they ever saw in their life. And Kenneth Lonergan has been a finalist before with "Lobby Hero" and "Waverly Gallery". It is a playwright I really admire and I thought this one was really about so much. I probably would have had to fight for that one, it depends who else was on the committee, it is one of those that if it would have got to be finalist there would be a lot of

people who would have said “what, that one!?”. And then I don’t know what the deal is on the Horton Foote cycle because these were preexisting plays but they were cut and put together in a way that makes a different kind of form of theater. I would think that would be in the running, it’s very American, quite straightforward story telling. HE is a sentimental favorite and he is dead. I don’t know if they have ever given a Pulitzer to a dead guy – did they?

KS: Yeah. I read there was one but I forgot who it was – oh of course – “Rent”.

LW: Yeah! Jonathan Larson was already gone. It’s not as if Horton Foote needs another prize but in terms of achievement, it is a massive achievement, those nine plays in three nights. And I have always had a tendency to underestimate him because I always think it is so straightforward, how hard could it be? But over the years I have realized – (talk about wine)

- and so I would think that in terms of things that are making a big impact, that it is possible that the Horton Foote - I am just thinking in terms of what I would do and what others might do.

KS: How about “Next Fall”?

LW: I saw it last summer and I didn’t review it, it opened when I was away. And I am going to review it in a couple of weeks and I actually don’t like the play. I think it is boring. I think it is so conventional that I cannot imagine why everyone is excited about it. I think it’s one step from made-for-TV movie. It is possible when I see it on Broadway in three weeks that I totally change my mind. I always leave myself the freedom to do that because otherwise life would be no fun. But I have not thought about it as a contender.

KS: Because somebody else mentioned it to me.

LW: I think it’s crap. You know – two guys, one is a Christian and one is an Atheist, they are I love. I am sorry I can’t love somebody who is a Martian. If your worldview is so different, can you really maintain a relationship, I am not sure I believe that. You know it’s people from different planets – I am a believer, I am not a believer. It is possible you might struggle with somebody at the beginning of a relationship because

you are attracted to them but I can't believe you make it past the second fuck.

KS: I agree with you but one of my really good friends is married to a Jewish guy, who is totally Jewish and she is not and they live happily ever after.

LW: Is she a believer?

KS: No, nothing.

LW: For me it's loving a Republican – I can't. Or loving someone who didn't love animals. It simply doesn't compete for me and if I did fall in love with someone who was a Republican or didn't love animals, I would torment myself so much that there is no way the relationship would last.

KS: So "Next Fall" not on your shortlist.

LW: Not on my shortlist.

KS: So how did you actually become a theater critic?

LW: Ah the "how did it happen"? I always wanted to be veterinarian and so I went to music school. My degree is in music and I didn't know what to do with it because really I wanted to be a veterinarian. I was the only female in pre-vet at the university of Illinois and went crazy from the isolation back then. It is not a female dominated profession. I have never written anything beyond school papers and I didn't really read that newspapers that much. And I was living in Chicago – I was born and raised in Chicago. There was Rockefeller foundation program for the training of classical music critics. And that's what I always tell my students "I know it is really, really boring to hear about how much more interesting the 60s were but try to imagine a Rockefeller foundation multi year program for the training of classical music critics and you have some idea of what a good time it was to be alive and young.

KS: That is what everybody tells me.

LW: It's like old farts telling war stories but God it was better. So it was a multi year program. It was two years each one but it went on for about ten years and the picked four people from the country that year and I got one. So I studied with all the major theater critics of that year and they would do what I do with my students here, I would write review and they would tear them apart. And the second year was an apprentorship and I was an

apprentice to the Chicago Tribune where I stayed for eleven and I made this strange transition from classical music critic to becoming a theater and dance critic and I was their in large theater and dance critic for six years in a row of these eleven years.

And It was always something I thought of "I don't want to do this forever but I will do this until I get bored." I never got bored.

KS: Do you miss music?

LW: I don't miss writing about music. I found that writing about music is the hardest thing because you are trying to say something, especially for a general publication, for a general audience, you trying to talk about something that is so abstract for a general audience. I struggled and I found that when you finally do say something, the number of people who know you actually did was so small and the number of people who would catch you every time you made a mistake. But the fact is that my husband is a classical music critic, so I get to go to whatever I want anyway and he has to do the hard stuff.

KS: You get the benefits.

LW: I think we are like a sitcom, "Critics in Love" – isn't that a sitcom to you?

KS: Totally.

LW: I knew that – he was the music critic at the Los Angeles Times for about 750 years until I stole him and I keep him in a tower and I only allow him out for only a number of appearances and the first going-sleep-mad-waking-up-mad fight we ever had was. You know that first fight in a relationship when you don't even want to feel the warmth of the other person in the bed; was over the second act of "Sunday in the Park with George" in 1948. So I thought that was funny.

(laugther)

KS: That must be a great relationship if these are the things you argue about.

LW: It is fantastic, it's great.

KS: That is wonderful. So you just became and stayed a theater critic.

LW: What happened in Chicago in the early 70s, there was a man who was the theatre critic, who as he described was the drama and salon critic

and he did review the Broadway road show and dinner theater and salons. And there was all this stuff going on in my neighborhood, people started doing theater in Chicago and we had nobody to do it so I said “I go.” So I basically grew up in publi the Chicago theater movement and David Mamets first play in Chicago, “The Duck Variations” was the first new play I ever reviewed. Peter Sellers, the director, one time said to me “You were in Chicago in the 70s!?” and I said “Yeah and we didn’t even know it.” And I used to review Malcovich when he was this big and so it was great. And then I needed to come to New York. It was scary enough. It is that kind of dead line mentality, if I fail, I will die, and I had lost that. I had to come to place where every day is like that.

KS: Have you ever thought of doing anything else in the theater? Like writing a play?

LW: No, I am so not a frustrated performer. I was a pianist, that was my instrument, from when I was five years old but even that was the closest I have come to performing. I mean I have done theater in college and shit like that. I am not writing about theater because I can’t do it. I am writing about theater because I believe that is a separate profession. I believe being a theatre critic is it’s on thing and that it’s a part of the process having that conversation in public with the audience. I never thought about that. You know I could become an animal rights lawyer.

KS: How do you manage to keep a fresh eye. You go to a play, what five times a week? Don’t you sometimes just drift off with your thoughts when you are in there?

LW: I tell you what – 6.30 at night I don’t want to go, 6:30 get up from the nap, put on the make up, have to go to the theater, don’t want to go. The minute I am in the theater and those lights go down, I am there. Now there are times when 20 minutes into the play I think I don’t want to be here for very, very good reasons. Not because I am drifting off but because they are not keeping me there. But I am in this for very selfish reasons because I want to have what I refer to as a transcendent experience. I want to walk out of the theater different to when I walked in and it doesn’t happen often but when it does it’s like dope. And it keeps me going through all the boring nights. And often even during the boring nights there is going to be

something. I love it, you know. It is still my job. But as my husband says, he was my teacher, he gave me my Rockefeller grant but we weren't an item until many, many years later – tell his children!

(laugther) I swear we weren't! So as my husband, the very wise Pulitzer Prize winning music critic, from whom I learned everything about criticism and he learned everything else from me, says a professional is someone who does it when they don't feel like it. And that really that there is a level of professionalism, underneath which you do not go and so if you had a fight with your spouse or a bad dinner, that gets put aside for the fact that somebody's work is on the stage and that's why you there. I have been doing it for 40 years.

KS: But you don't review every show you go to?

LW: I used to. But Newsday is less and less interested in minor things that I don't find that interesting, so I go to some things just to spot check if I want to write about it or not. I have that option. I am only allowed three reviews per week and a Sunday column that can be anything I want, it's like 900 words. It keeps me from going completely insane 375 word reviews. So that's essays, that's just great fun for me.

KS: How does it work – and I only saw little clip of this American Theatre Wing thing you did 10 years ago, where all these critics sit around the table. I sadly have only been able to see a clip today but I saw this clip where you said that you can not be friends with the people you write about. So now 10 years later, has that changed?

LW: No, I have no friends in the theater world. I still believe that I have something as emotional conflicts of interest which I believe are much more dangerous than somebody buying you a dinner, you know. I learned it in Chicago because there were all these people living in my neighborhood, who looked like me and thought like me and they putting on theaters. And I was friends with them and was writing about them and so many had said to me "oh don't worry, you do what you do and we do what we do and we can still maintain a friendship" and the fact is we can not. My job is to say things you don't say in polite society, it is not a cocktail party and the number of people who can withstand that is actually very, very small and the number of people. And I found that if I can picture the face of the

person I am writing about, above the keyboard when I am writing, I am in trouble. That there is enough complications between me and the event and the review, without putting friendship in there. And you know I have one friend now, who is a producer, who got in under my radar, because she wasn't a producer when we became friends and I told her it's a bake and switch friendship. And for a while I wasn't reviewing her shows. And she has got more and more things happening and I can't just not do them. So I've started reviewing her shows and she was one of the producers on "Superior Doughnuts" which I didn't like and that was our first time when we had to talk on the phone and at first it was all fine and then she said she was really tired and I was like "Why are you really tired" and she replied "I had a bad week, my friend stabbed me in the back".

KS: Woah.

LW: She was kidding but it was on her mind and something about "I disappointed you but you disappointed me too", so it was – and now she has got an other one going on. And basically I told her now if she just has money in a play, don't tell me, I just don't want to know. But if her name is above the title, I have to deal with it and I am getting through it and I am reviewing the next thing that she is producing. But if that is my problem with one person, can you imagine? And I don't know if it's a women thing because a lot of my colleagues are in the community and consider themselves part of the community and maybe I have a different feeling about friends or maybe I was raised wanting to be liked. It seems to be to be incompatible systems.

KS: I can totally understand that.

LW: It's cleaner.

KS: How about plays outside of the US? Do see plays in England?

LW: I used to go at least every two years or every year and now that Newsday, you know most papers don't send anyone anywhere, except the Times and so I have not been to London in probably six years. And I have this feeling I am not paying my own way to go, no. And then writing about it, no, I am not doing that. And it is not Newsday's fault. Journalism is in such trouble. I was the critic in Large for USA Today for five years, from '82 to '87. And I was based in New York but I was reviewing all the major

theater and dance and music all around the country and it was a great gig for a while until the limitations of the form started getting to me but I've seen a lot regional theater and I have reviewed a lot of regional theater. And when I was at the Tribune they sent me around a lot because it was a different time and even at Newsday in the pervious years I traveled a lot but right now Broadway is out of town.

KS: How do you feel about other critics? Are there critics that you agree with often, that you like?

LW: Yeah sure, I love there being a lot of voices. I get five newspapers delivered to my door every morning, still, and I love reading them and I try to keep up with what colleagues are saying. It's a congenial group and I like them a lot but of course there is some that I find more reliable than others. And that is the thing about readers too. As a reader you sort of read around until you find people who sort of have your sensibility.

KS: I just have two big subjects still, I hope you're not too stressed. How much time do we have left?

LW: It is twenty to six, so I am fine. I am not going to the theater tonight and I went last night and I am going tomorrow and Sunday. I am not going tonight.

KS: Let's talk about "Proof".

LW: Oh.

KS: Great, I love your face. Well, my first question was what made it stand out for you?

LW: Perhaps I can send you my reviews.

KS: Yes.

LW: Was it Off-Broadway and then moved onto Broadway?

KS: Yes.

LW: So I probably reviewed it twice. I will send you my reviews of "Proof". And let it stand like that.

KS: Okay, that's fine you can totally do that.

LW: Then that is public record.

KS: How did you feel it compared to the other productions? To the other short-listed ones that year – "The play about the baby" and "The Weaverly Gallery"?

LW: I'd rather not say.

KS: Okay. It's only my thesis.

LW: I know it's only your thesis.

KS: It's a thesis in German, too, so the chances that anyone will read it –

LW: Oh my husband will read it –

KS: anybody ever reading it are very –

LW: It was – it would have not been my first choice.

KS: Would you have short-listed it?

(she shakes her head)

KS: Okay. Did you see the film adaptation of it?

LW: No.

KS: Okay. (laughter) I completely agree that is very conventional in the way that it's set up and the more plays that I read it becomes more and more clear compared to other stuff. I saw the movie first I have to say before I ever knew it was a play or anything. And I liked her performance, Gwyneth Paltrows performance in the movie, and I liked it and I thought – and he is alive and easy to be reached. Everybody else like, what's his face – "Doubt" – there would be no chance of meeting him.

LW: Shannley wouldn't talk to you?

KS: No, that he wouldn't talk me. I don't even think he lives in New York and looked into reaching him but he has so many things going on.

LW: He is an interesting guy. I am sure Auburn is too but I know Shannley a little bit, just because I have lounged the mansion (?!?!) a few year. Are the comments we write about plays public record, you know our three recommendations and why?

KS: (shakes her head) This is really just an academic paper, this is not for public use in any way.

(laugther)

Let's go more general now.

LW: Yes!

KS: Adaptations, how did you feel about adaptations in general – do you watch them do you see them? Film adaptations of plays.

LW: Of plays. If I like the play, I do and I find it very interesting to see what they do. I think "Doubt" was a play I liked and I believe the movie was very

true to it. “Doubt” was very, very different from Shannleys previous work and I had not been that much of a fan of Shannley previously and I actually didn’t know he had that play in him. So there was a certain amount of surprise and delight that he could do this. And I think the movie version held up very well. The movie version of “Rent”, I didn’t see…

KW: In general do you think a play becomes obsolete once it’s a movie? That people are less interested in the play?

LW: This is so interesting –it used to be true that once a movie was made of a play, the play would die because people would say “I saw the movie for $10, why would I go and spend a $100 and see the play”. What changed that was “Chicago” the musical, that completely bumped that trend up. That the producers of “Chicago” played it so beautifully that they went on the curtails of the movie and what happens is in recent decades people seem to want familiar things. It’s that branding thing that has become so important and so instead of seeing the movie and then coming to New York and thinking “oh I don’t want to see this, I already saw the movie”, it made it that much more famous “Oh I know this, I saw the movie, I want to see the movie on the stage” and so there has been actual sea change but it goes along with people wanting to see - I think the whole “make a musical” in the 80s was the way that people sold it, that the plot that everybody knew – it was you know “Phantom of the opera” – a plot they knew, it was music that sounded like music they knew before. You know they could sing it without knowing it before. And there was also always a lot of extra theatrical publicity around. But that’s a different story. I believe that right now what that has transferred to is people want to see movie stars on the stage, they want to see something familiar and if it has been a movie it is already a star. The movie is a movie star. So the play is a movie star.

KS: Right. If the next step in evolution – if a play is successful then as the next step of evolution it becomes a movie? What does it mean for theater itself, as an independent art form? The movie is final piece?

LW: I think it is very much so. I think the number of plays that can be turned into movies is very small. My favorite kind of theater is theater that can only exist on stage. It is on stage because that is where it needs to be.

And the script that are the most to translate into the movies are probably the ones that needed the stage less. The theater that I love the most can only exist on stage, that there is a reason why it is on the stage. The ones that are the easiest to be turned into movies tend to be very narrative driven and could have been movies to begin with. That's just a personal preference.

KS: Do you feel that there is artistic relevance to the movie or do you feel it's only a money machine?

LW: I think it depends on the movie. I think "Doubt" stayed within the confines of the claustrophobic making play very well. I wouldn't have known for sure it would have made a good movie but I think it did. "Angles in America" because it was HBO. I was terrified about "Angeles in America" and I also didn't think Mike Nichols was the right director for it, I thought he wasn't going to get it and it was all going to be flat and made different. And I think he did an amazing job. Similarly the HBO movie of "Wit" except that Emma Thompson was allowed to have too much eye make up in the hospital. She didn't fix her eyeliner during her chemo, no, you know.

KS: I agree. So you watch films obviously watch films but you watch them for pleasure not professionally.

LW: I sometimes write movie reviews because I am asked to fill in for someone. I have done it throughout my career. I have been offered jobs as movie critics. I have never wanted it. I love the theater more. I love going to movies but it is a different experience for me.

KS: What do you feel is the difference between the two for you? When you look at them and the experiences you have with them and the way you look at them critically – what are the difference to you? Besides the obvious ones – one is filmed and one is live.

LW: That's hard. I think one of the differences is that movies are narrative driven, have to be. I hate -

KS: And plays – would not be narrative driven?

LW: Most of the time – I mean there are a lot of other things happening, the poetry and the language does not usually translate, usually things that are fantastic in terms of language on the stage can sound horribly

mannered and self conscious and ridiculous in the movies. But I think they are both can be awful and they both can be wonderful and they both can be just fun entertainment. Just piece by piece.

KS: In judging what is the greatest difference, when you critic theater and when you critic movies? What is the greatest difference, what do you mention to be different? Do you think of aspects like camera work when you -

LW: I mean, yeah you have to. You look at different things. It's too hard of a question. This Sunday column that I do on the theater, for the first – I don't know- 10 years I was at Newsday, I wrote twice a week or once a week a column that was about politics of the arts and so I would very often see movies, to be able to write about them in terms about what they say about the culture. This interested me much more than reviewing an actual film. You know I really like to talk about what brought the resonances of a film.

KS: What kind of difference it makes.

LW: Yes.

KS: Something that my research –

LW: And that is the last question then I got to go.

KS: It is also the most important question in a way. Something that my research has shown is that most of the people who live in the theater do not live off the theater. They have to work in the movie or TV industry to survive, what is your view on that? How are aware are you of the process that film and TV are actually keeping theater alive?

LW: I am very aware of it, it's tragic but that isn't to say that everyone who works in TV or movies are whores because It's simply not true. I believe that "Law & Order" is the Ford foundation grand for the theater. The number of people who are being kept alive in order to be able to work in theater by New York produced television is astonishing and while it's sobering it is not the biggest sell out I can imagine.

KS: Do you remember a time when theater was able to sustain itself?

LW: No.

KS: Okay, thank you very much.

END OF THE INTERVIEW.

Abstract

Die Diplomarbeit setzt sich mit den Bedeutungszusammenhängen zwischen dem Pulitzer-Preis für Drama und der filmischen Adaption von Stücken, die diesen Preis gewonnen haben, auseinander.

Es werden sowohl die Entstehungsgeschichte des Preises und seine kulturelle Bedeutung als auch das Phänomen der Adaption analysiert. Hierbei ist es notwendig, die Mechanismen dieses Preises zu verstehen, um seinen Wirkungsbereich zu erkennen. Über die Adaption kommt es zu Vergleichen zwischen Film und Theater, die ausch erklären, welchen Wert die filmische Übertragung eines Bühnenwerkes für den Autor selbst hat.

Exemplarisch werden in der Folge David Auburn und sein Werk untersucht. *Proof* war im letzten Jahrzehnt das meist gespielte Stück am Broadway und Auburn hat 2001 den Pulitzer-Preis für Theater gewonnen. Der Blick auf einen Autor und sein Werk erlaubt einen intensiveren Einblick in die Wirkungszusammenhänge zwischen Theaterstück, Preis und Verfilmung.

Im Rahmen der gesamten Arbeit werden natürlich immer wieder auch Theaterstücke anderer Dramatiker erwähnt, um auch hier den Vergleich zu ermöglichen. Das letzte Unterkapitel behandelt schließlich kurz den Misserfolg oder Erfolg anderer Adaptionen, um einen Überblick zu schaffen. Der Schwerpunkt liegt auf Werken der letzten 20 Jahre; es werden aber auch andere Werke erwähnt. Die Schwierigkeit der Adaption wird untersucht, aber auch ihre Notwendigkeit erklärt.

Lebenslauf

Katharina Sporrer
geboren am 1. Mai 1986 in Wien

AUSBILDUNG	
2011	Romanistik an der **Universität Wien**
2004-2011	Theater-, Film- und Medienwissenschaft an der **Universität Wien**
	- Nebenfächer: Vergleichende Literatur, Deutsch als Fremdsprache
2010	Cours de Civilisation Française de **la Sorbonne**
2010	Recherche an der **Columbia University**, New York City
	- Diplomarbeit "Film – Der Retter des Theaters?"
2009	Erasmusstudienaufenthalt an der **Universität Mainz**
	- vorbereitende Recherche für die Diplomarbeit
2004-2005	"Theater Schreiben" am **Burgtheater, Wien**
2002-2004	**BRG VI** Marchettigasse 3, 1060 Vienna
	- Matura mit ausgezeichnetem Erfolg bestanden
2001-2002	Austauschjahr **Alma Bryant High School** in Irvington, Alabama, USA

MEDIENEFAHRUNG	
2011	Praktikum in der **Radioredaktion** von Wosch. Die Energy Abendschau, Berlin
2006 - 2008	Zweimonatliches **TV-Magazin "Community Talk"** bei Lokalsender Okto
	- Research, On-Camera Interviews, Post-Production (Editing Final Cut Pro)
2006	**Printjournalismus Praktikum** bei der **Der Standard** im Medienressort
	- Eigenständige Recherche, Interviews, Veröffentlichung eigener Artikel
2002 - 2004	**Freie journalistische Mitarbeit**, Jugendmagazin **"jugendinwien"**
	- Artikel zu Reisen/Literatur/Konzerte/Musik

ANDERE BERUFLICHE ERFAHRUNGEN	
2006 - 2010	**Schauspielerische Tätigkeiten** in den USA, Deutschland und Österreich
2009	Unterrichtspraktikum **Deutsch als Fremdsprache** am Vorstudienlehrgang
2006	**Community Work** in der Co-ordination Cooperative Tuntable Falls, Australia
	- Renovierung von Hütten, Gartenarbeiten
2000 - 2004	**Jurymitglied des Österreichischen Jugendbuchpreises**