Introduction

Good afternoon and welcome to the 2011 Top Class concert for Theatre Studies. My name is Eli Erez and it is my pleasure to present to you ten exemplary monologue performances from the 2010 Theatre Studies Monologue Exam. The students you will see performing today auditioned for a selection panel, comprising of Richard Sallis, Meg Upton, and myself. Over the two days of auditions we saw many outstanding performances. The monologues we selected for you to see today not only met the exam criteria at a very high level but there was also something noteworthy about the performances which we thought might inform the work of students who will be sitting the monologue exam this year.

The Monologue task for Theatre Studies gets to the very heart of theatre as an art form. Students learn lines, make directorial and design decisions, develop roles and characters and perform them to an audience. For the purposes of the VCAA examination, the lines are in the form of a prescribed monologue and this monologue is to be presented to a panel of three Assessors who watch the performance under exam conditions.

The Monologue exam has eight assessment criteria. It is important to note that all the criteria have equal weighting and students must ensure that they address all of the criteria in their performance.
In order to get full marks for the first criteria, students must fulfil all of the requirements of the monologue structure. This first criterion is quantitative rather than qualitative. To get full marks for criteria one students must:

- Perform the prescribed version of the monologue
- Memorise the written text
- Perform within 7 minutes?
- Use stagecraft
- Present an appropriate context and theatrical style/or styles
- AND demonstrate a directorial vision

Whilst the first criteria functions as a check list, the other criteria are judged on how effectively the student has presented:

- Context
- Direction
- Theatrical style/s
- Acting skills
- Stagecraft other than acting, dramaturgy and direction
- Use of focus & space
- AND Tension & timing

Students should note that they are required to enact the entire monologue, without changing, adding or deleting any words or lines. A reminder to teachers that on request, the VCAA will send you a pdf of the scripts for this year’s monologues.
The monologues on the Theatre Studies performance exam will include a range of characters that are either male, or female or gender neutral, meaning that the gender of the character is not specified or is inconsequential to the plot of the play. Remember that you are welcome to play any of the characters but if the character is female then you must play the character as a female, even if you are a male actor. Today we will see a representation from all three of the gender categories. You will also see an example of a student who has selected a character of the opposite gender.

In between the monologues I will give you some further information about the requirements of the monologue task, and we will also hear from a couple of the performers - but let’s begin…
The first monologue comes from Thornton Wilder’s play *The Matchmaker* and is to be performed by Brittany Lewis.

This comedy was the inspiration for the Broadway musical ‘Hello Dolly’. Dolly Levi is the ‘matchmaker’, which gives the play its title. The time is the 1880s. The monologue is spoken both to Ephraim, her late husband and to the audience. In this monologue she explains why she has decided to ‘rejoin the human race’ and marry Horace Vandergelder, a wealthy New York widower.

- A challenge for students who performed this monologue was to convey both the comedy and the drama in the piece. Watch how Brittany conveys the strong emotional qualities of the text. She expertly maintains her characterisation throughout the monologue and is also able to focus the audience’s attention by effectively manipulating her performance space. Please welcome Brittany to the stage.
Our next performer is Abraham Theobald-Warren who is performing Queen Marguerite from *Exit the King* by Eugene Ionesco.

- In this absurdist play, King Berenger has been told he is dying. To his dismay, his body and mind rapidly begin to break down, reflecting the crumbling of his kingdom. At the end of the play, he is blind and deaf and must trust his wife, Queen Marguerite to unburden him of his royal belongings and lead him to his death.
- I would like to reiterate that male and female students can play any of the characters on the monologue exam. However, you must remember that if you do so, you can’t change the gender of the character. Watch how Abraham expertly uses his acting skills to portray this leading female role.
Thank you Abraham.

- We will now have the opportunity to see another monologue from ‘Exit The King’. This time we will see King Berenger’s monologue performed by Rian Henshall. Each year the setting panel for the Theatre Studies Monologue exam try to find plays where there is more than one monologue contained within it.
- One of the interesting aspects of this task is that no students’ interpretation of any monologue will be the same. It should also be noted that there is no such thing as a definitive way in which the monologue should be performed. It’s important to use your imagination, and be creative whilst keeping in mind the playwright’s intended meaning. If you wish, you can change the original time and setting of the play to another appropriate context.
- In this interpretation Rian Henshall has deliberately re-contextualised his monologue. Watch Rian’s clever use of stagecraft and how these choices serve to support the context he has created and how these choices have influenced his character.

RIAN’S PERFORMANCE

- Thanks Rian.

- Rian will now give you some insights into his interpretation
RIAN’S SPEECH:

In my monologue, King Berenger is the CEO of an international tobacco company; however the themes remain the same as Ionesco’s script. Isolated from the world of his creation, physically deteriorating and in denial of his circumstances, CEO Berenger clutches at the fading remains of his empire and power.

His Secretaries, Marie and Marguerite, are seated in their separate offices to the left and right of Berenger. His disconnection from them and others is symbolised by his intercom, which is his only means of communication to the outside world. He is confounded by the new world that does not respond to him (i.e. his computer). The golden light of his scotch is the only colour left in his world, and so he pleads desperately to it for support and escape.

Berenger’s desire to let the world die, to keep him alive, is reflected damningly in his business; selling cigarettes in order to keep himself financially afloat.

However, he himself suffers for this; suffering from emphysema, he struggles throughout the monologue to maintain his dignity and power, and is eventually left with the realisation that he is going to die.
Edward Orton

St Michael’s Grammar

Antony

Thank you Rian for clarifying some of the directorial decisions you have made in your performance. This year’s Theatre Studies students should note that on the day of your exam, you have the opportunity to present to the three Assessors a copy of your **Statement of Intention**. This is a 100 word document that can provide the assessors with valuable insights into how you have interpreted your monologues context and/or other choices you have made.

- Next we have Edward Orton presenting Antony from Shakespeare’s classic tragedy, *Antony and Cleopatra*.
- Mark Antony is a Roman soldier who is leading his army to fight his enemy, Octavius Caesar. In this monologue he realises that he has lost the battle and that his enemy is about to claim victory. Worse still, it appears that his lover, Cleopatra, the Queen of Egypt, may have helped Octavius to secure his defeat.
- Edward has also played with the context of his monologue. He has very effectively developed a modern corporate world where big business takeovers are conducted on mobile phones.
Thanks Edward.

Now we will get to see the other side of the story. Melissa D’Angelo will now perform the part of Cleopatra from the same play.

In this monologue Cleopatra’s life is in ruins, following the death of her lover Mark Antony. She says farewell to her servants before taking her own life. A basket of poisonous snakes is brought to her chamber so she can carry out this deed.

When performing a monologue students are required to apply stagecraft such as; costume, props, make-up, sound, multimedia and set items to the performance. It is worth remembering that students should choose stagecraft carefully.

In this monologue, notice how Melissa has made very deliberate choices and has selected props, costume and make-up, that convey a sense of the regal nature of her character and the period and setting in which the play takes place.
Thank you Melissa

- Now for another performance of Dolly Levi from *The Matchmaker*, this time performed by Caitlin Gifford. We have selected these two versions so you can see how the same monologue can be interpreted quite differently.
- Notice, also how Caitlin develops a relationship with the audience and how we are drawn into Dolly’s thoughts and feelings.
- One of the criteria for the examination is Tension and Timing. Watch how Caitlin skilfully manipulates these elements in her performance.
Thanks Caitlin.

One of the most popular choices last year was the character of the ‘Herald’ from *Marat/Sade* by Peter Weiss. Stronger performances, like the one we are about to see, effectively recreated the world of the play and conveyed a strong sense of the character and his or her function within it.

- The Herald is a gender neutral character meaning that it can be performed as a male or a female. There are often a couple of gender neutral choices on the monologue exam.

- The play *Marat/Sade* is set in the bath hall of an insane asylum some years after the French Revolution. The Marquis de Sade has written a play which is to be performed by the inmates. In the following monologue the Herald introduces the actors and the parts they will play and gives a brief summary of the plot.

- In Bridget Leggatt’s performance, take note of the symbolic choices she makes. Her use of stagecraft may appear simple but it is her selection and manipulation of this stagecraft that makes her performance most noteworthy.
Thanks Bridget.

The most popular character last year was Angela from the play *Secret Bridesmaid’s Business* by Elizabeth Coleman. We are about to see this monologue performed by Eloise Cassidy. It is the night before the wedding of Angela’s close friend, Meg. She reminisces about their friendship and divulges a dark secret from the past that could possibly ruin the fairy-tale wedding that Meg hopes for.

- The **use and application of theatrical styles** is another exam criterion. The dialogue in this monologue is very naturalistic and requires highly believable acting skills. Sometimes naturalistic performances can appear deceptively simple because the language sounds so commonplace. But making the dialogue sound realistic and staging the monologue in a naturalistic manner can often be harder than it first appears. Sometimes naturalistic scenes can be quite static to watch.
- The other challenge with this monologue was that it was both comical and serious. Watch how Eloise skilfully moves between comedy and drama while maintaining the naturalistic style.
Thanks Eloise.

We are now going to ask Eloise to talk to you about how she prepared for her monologue exam. This will provide you with valuable insights into her rehearsal process which may influence the development of your own monologue.

ELOISE’S SPEECH

Firstly, I read through each of the set monologues, and chose the one that I thought best suited my theatrical taste, and played to my strengths.

After choosing my monologue, I set about reading the entire play Secret Bridesmaids Business so as to gain an understanding of Angela’s ‘full’ character- not just what is revealed in the selected passage.

My advice would be to learn your monologue straight as early as possible, so that you have more freedom to move around and explore the space. I know I found it so much easier to experiment with ideas without the script in my hand!

Crucial to my creative process was settling on a context, as this not only affected my choice of set and costume, but also my characterisation.

I then went through my monologue and highlighted words and lines, which I thought would emphasise the dramatic and poignant moments, as well as bringing out the moments of humour.

I strongly recommend that during the development process you perform to as many people as possible. I found this very helpful, as the feedback I was given was taken on board, and resulted in me editing and improving certain parts of my performance.

Good Luck to everyone who is about to undertake their monologues.

Thank you
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<th>STUDENT</th>
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<th>CHARACTER</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amelia O’Brien</td>
<td>Brentwood SC</td>
<td>Queen Marguerite</td>
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Thank you Eloise

Earlier we saw Abraham’s interpretation of Queen Marguerite from Ionesco’s ‘Exit the King’. Now, as a point of contrast, we have Amelia O’Brien performing the same monologue.

- When watching Amelia’s performance, take note of the directorial decisions she has made to bring the character and the scene to life. In particular note how she deals with the implied person of King Berenger who is supposed to be on stage for the whole of the monologue.

- **Tension and timing** is another criterion. Students are required to effectively convey a sense of the inherent tension within the script and do so using appropriate dramatic timing. Watch out for the skilful way Amelia uses both **comic and dramatic timing and tension** in her delivery of the lines.
STUDENT       SCHOOL       CHARACTER
Mathew McLaughlin  Loyola College  Death

Thanks Amelia.

Now for our final performance we have Mathew McLaughlin performing the character of ‘Death’ from *Everyman*.

Although the playwright is unknown, we know that the play was first published in England in the 16\textsuperscript{th} century. In this Christian morality play God calls on Death to seek out ‘Everyman’ who has lived outside God's law. Death is to bring forth ‘Everyman’ for a final reckoning.

- ‘Death’ was another popular character last year and this character was successfully interpreted in a myriad of ways by different students. Some performances were serious, others gruesome and some like Mathew’s were entirely comical. Watch how Mathew effectively uses his acting skills to enhance his character.
Conclusion

- Well there we have it. Ten exemplary performances from the 2010 Theatre Studies Monologue examination.
- For those of you enrolled in Theatre Studies this year we hope these performances have inspired you.
- If you are sitting there right now and thinking, ‘I could never reach that standard’, it might surprise you to hear that some of the performers you saw here today have told us that they were thinking the same thing, this time last year. I am sure that next year we will be seeing some of you up here for Top Class 2012.
- I’d particularly like to thank today’s performers, and their families and friends who have supported them through this journey. It should be remembered that the exam was back in October, and that the performers today have had to re-work their monologues - and in some cases re-make their costumes, acquire new props and re-learn their lines.
- I think they have done a wonderful job today so let’s give them a thunderous round of applause as we invite them all back to the stage.
BEGIN WITH PERFORMANCE OF ANTONY MONOLOGUE
BY JORDAN PRAINITO

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<th>STUDENT</th>
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<tr>
<td>Jordon Prainito</td>
<td>Geelong Grammar</td>
<td>Antony</td>
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That was Jordan Prainito, ladies and gentleman with his interpretation of Antony from Shakespeare’s classic tragedy, ‘Antony and Cleopatra’

You will have noticed Jordan’s outstanding use of tension and timing in the delivery of his performance. He also uses his expressive skills very effectively to communicate the Shakespearean language and make clear the context of the monologue.

- Please give Jordan another round of applause
Introduction
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In between the monologues I will give you some further information about the requirements of the monologue task, and we will also hear from a couple of the performers - but let’s get back to the performances shall we…
STUDENT | SCHOOL | CHARACTER
--- | --- | ---
Elise Naismith | Mt Lilydale College | Cleopatra

Next up we have another monologue from ‘Antony and Cleopatra’ but this time we will see Elise Naismith performing the role of Cleopatra.

- Each year the setting panel for the Theatre Studies Monologue exam try to find plays where there is more than one monologue contained within it.
- In this monologue Cleopatra’s life is in ruins, following the death of her lover Mark Antony. She says farewell to her servants before taking her own life. A basket of poisonous snakes is brought to her chamber so she can carry out this deed.
- When performing a monologue students are required to apply stagecraft such as; costume, props, make-up, sound, multimedia and set items to the performance. It is worth remembering that students should choose stagecraft carefully.
- Notice how Elise has made deliberate choices in her selection of props, costume and make-up which creates a strong central motif for her interpretation

PERFORMANCE

- Thanks Elise.
- Elise will now give you some insights into her interpretation
ELISE’S SPEECH

Hello everyone! I hope you enjoyed my interpretation of Cleopatra. I have been asked to speak today about the decisions I made regarding the interpretation of my monologue.

The biggest challenge with the monologues is trying to make your interpretation different from every other Theatre Studies student in Victoria who chose the same monologue as you. For this reason, I was very keen to try something different with Cleopatra. The ideas I came up with included changing the setting to modern day and I even thought of changing her age. I improvised Cleopatra as an elderly lady with dementia. After a couple of weeks of experimenting I ended up deciding to keep it simple and just focus on the character. I realised I would be making the task quite a lot more difficult for myself in changing the context, just to be different. Shakespeare is very visual, beautiful and highly symbolic in language so I wanted to reflect this in my set, prop and costuming. I chose the two bold colours Gold and Black so that it was strong, yet simple enough so it didn’t detract from the acting. My set is rather minimalistic, the big black box and pillars also fit the strong, yet simple notion I was going for. I chose to include the black cat to symbolise the relationship between cats and ancient Egypt. The dress is rather modern; however I felt it suited the part. As far as hair and makeup, my natural colourings aren’t typical of Cleopatra. I considered using a wig however I decided that that would be a choice many other students may make and that also it may detract from the desired truthfulness of my acting.

Depending on your strengths as a Theatre Studies student, the main key of advice is to keep it simple and then build on it later. Sometimes the strongest statements in theatre are made by the smallest things.
Thanks Elise

Our next performance will be Trent Bolden’s interpretation of the ‘Herald’ from *Marat/Sade* by Peter Weiss. We have selected two versions of this monologue for today’s concert. The second will be presented at the end of the program and will allow you to see how the same monologue can be interpreted in entirely different ways. This character was one of the popular choices last year. Stronger performances, like the one we are about to see, effectively recreated the world of the play and conveyed a strong sense of the character and their function within it.

In this performance, Trent has made very clear and effective choices relating to the theatrical style of his piece which strongly convey a sense of Theatre of Cruelty.
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<tr>
<td>Matthew Sneyd</td>
<td>Notre Dame Sheparton</td>
<td>Death</td>
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Thanks Trent

Now we have Matthew Sneyd performing the character of ‘Death’ from *Everyman*.

Although the playwright is unknown, we know that the play was first published in England in the 16th century. In this Christian morality play God calls on Death to seek out ‘Everyman’ who has lived outside God's law. Death is to bring forth ‘Everyman’ for a final reckoning.

‘Death’ was another popular character last year and this character was successfully interpreted in a myriad of ways by different students. Some performances were serious, others gruesome and some, like Matthew’s, were highly dramatic. Notice Matthew’s directorial decisions and outstanding use of his acting skills in his portrayal of this character.
Thanks Matthew.

Now Ryan Murphy is going to portray the character of Horace Vandergelder from *The Matchmaker* by Thornton Wilder. This comedy was the inspiration for the Broadway musical ‘Hello Dolly’.

In this monologue, Vandergelder, a wealthy old widower professes his aim to remarry in order to get himself a housekeeper.

Notice in Ryan’s performance his strong characterisation, and in particular his ability to convey the age of the character along with Vandergelder’s status and accent. His style of performance is highly appropriate for this particular play. Notice also how well Ryan draws the audience into his performance with his skilful use of focus and space.
Thanks Ryan.

- We will now have the opportunity to see another monologue from ‘The Matchmaker’, as Krystal Mizzi presents her interpretation of Mrs Levi.

- Dolly Levi is the ‘matchmaker’, which gives the play its title. The time is the 1880s. The monologue is spoken both to Ephraim, her late husband and to the audience. In this monologue she explains why she has decided to ‘rejoin the human race’ and marry Horace Vandergelder, the wealthy New York widower.

- A challenge for students who performed this monologue was to convey both the comedy and the drama in the piece. Watch Krystal’s excellent use of tension and timing to enhance her comedic portrayal of the character, without sacrificing the strong emotional qualities of the text. Her use of **focus and space** is also exemplary.
Thanks Krystal.

- Now we have the first of two performances of the character of King Berenger, from Ionesco’s play *Exit the King*. King Berenger was a popular character choice last year, and there were many exceptional and entirely different interpretations of this role.
- One of the interesting aspects of this task is that no students’ interpretation of any monologue will be the same. It should also be noted that there is no such thing as a definitive way in which the monologue should be performed. It’s important to use your imagination, and be creative whilst keeping in mind the playwright’s intended meaning.
- In this absurdist play, King Berenger has been told he is dying. To his dismay, his body and mind rapidly begin to break down, reflecting the crumbling of his kingdom.
- On the day of your exam, you have the opportunity to present to the three Assessors a copy of your *Statement of Intention*. This is a 100 word document that can provide the assessors with valuable insights into how you have interpreted your monologues context and/or other choices you have made.
- Our first performance of this monologue is by Daniel Carison. In this interpretation Daniel has dressed King Berenger in a hospital gown. His careful selection of stagecraft helps to define his context. After the performance Daniel will give us some brief insights into his process.

**DANIEL’S PERFORMANCE AND SPEECH**
Good Morning Ladies and Gentlemen.

My name is Daniel Carison, I am a current student at Marcellin College and I would like to thank you for the opportunity of coming to perform and speak with you today about my monologue development process.

So, where do I begin? The process of bringing the monologue to life on stage was indeed a very time consuming and arduous task, but one that has proven to be very rewarding. When I was faced with the choice of picking a monologue just a little under a year ago now, I began by looking at all the monologues that were on offer. I read all the monologues to initially get a feel for what they were all about. Of course there were some I liked more than others (Berenger being one of those) and thus I decided to do a little further research into the plays and the characters. I knew right from the word go that I wanted to play to my strengths, I knew there was no such thing as an easy monologue or performance because all the monologues were different and unique in their own way, and had the versatility to be interpreted and performed brilliantly. So I made my decision to pick the King not only because the piece stood out as a fantastic piece of writing which I thought I could do well, but because it was a difficult piece which challenged me to go that one step further and extend myself as an actor and a performer. My advice is to definitely pick something that you love and will enjoy, but give yourself every opportunity to take something new from the experience and allow yourself the opportunity to develop.

With my monologue now picked I began rigorously researching and planning just how I was going to approach the piece. I began by simply researching into things like the play, the playwright, the plays themes, the theatrical styles and conventions, the period in which the play was written and when it was set, and tried to decipher what the purpose of the whole darn thing was. Now it seems like that is a lot to research and it can be, but the difference between a well interpreted monologue, and a brilliantly interpreted monologue is having the knowledge of it. Once I had a wealth of knowledge of the characteristics that made up the monologue I was then opened to a world of possibilities and ways in which I could then approach the piece. For example, Eugene Ionesco's 'Exit The King' was one of his many Absurdist theatre plays, thus I knew Theatre of The Absurd could and would play a large role in the development of my piece. It is, however, important to remember that it is your monologue and your interpretation of the work, and you aren't exactly limited to what you can do. Ensure that you make it your own, and consider what message you want your audience to take away from your performance.

This was something that I considered very deeply when developing my monologue, Ionesco had written the work to make a statement and send a message about the nature of man and his universe, but what else did I want to say? And how did I perhaps want to further emphasize Ionesco's messages in my performance?
I looked at many ways that I could do this, for example, through my costume (The three crowns being the tiara, the bandage and the black regal crown were all used to depict the different personalities within Berenger) The bandage was the old dying man in reality, the black crown was the dark, god-like figure that had influenced Berenger during his Kingship, and the tiara was symbolic of the selfish and childish brat who wanted to have it his own way. The walking stick was also shaped like a globe at the top and this was used to represent Berenger's weakening grip on the universe. This was just one of many ways in which I wanted to make a point about the nature of the mortal man and the importance of one's self within mankind. Remember to make very deliberate decisions about how you intend to get your messages across and you can draw inspiration from many different things, history, events, songs and other people or characters in society. Not everything has to be obvious, subtleties can give the performance great depth and still allow the performance to flow.

Learning the work is imperative to the performance and there are a number of different ways to approach this task. As my monologue was so long and exhausting I tried a number of different techniques to initially learn all of the text. Using tape recorders and recording yourself speaking your lines is one of the best ways to drum the lines into your head, this enables you to play back your lines whenever you want and allows you to save your voice (particularly if you are using tiring accents or perhaps shouting at certain moments). I found it particularly useful breaking the solo into sections, this not only allows you to break the back of the piece bit by bit, but also gives you the opportunity to develop what message you're trying to get across in that section. Don't be afraid to live out the work, say your lines at home, at school, and if you're really interested in extending your characterizations, apply your characters mannerisms and accents to your everyday life, live and be the character (within the boundaries of the law of course).

Tension and timing plays a vital role in any performance in engaging and holding the audiences full attention. One thing I found particularly useful was drawing up tension graphs which showed the wave of tension throughout the piece and highlighted the moments where I 'really went for it' and where I 'dulled it down'. In terms of directing the piece, the text itself should be a good indication of what you can do in terms of movement and direction.

It is important to make your directions quite deliberate and always ask yourself, "why is my character doing that? What does this say about the character and what does this tell the audience at this point in the monologue? For example, I deliberately chose to change crowns at certain moments because I found that some lines more closely related to a certain aspect of Berenger, and this constant shifting of crowns showed the conflict between Berenger's personalities.
Time does play a big role and here's the reality check. With just a week out before I was due to perform my solo for the exam I was finishing the piece at over 10 minutes. More than 3 minutes too long as specified by the VCAA. At this point I was completely disillusioned with my piece, I felt as though I had worked incredibly hard and was getting everything I wanted to across through my performance, but unless I finished it in 7 minutes all that work wouldn't be fully realised and appreciated. This experience taught me the importance of having good people around during this experience, it is very easy to become close minded about how you want to showcase your piece, but more often than not, having an extra pair of eyes and people around to support you will help you go that extra mile. I was very fortunate to have the support of my family and father Geoff, my tutors Tom and Anne and the support of the rest of my class to motivate me to ensure that I was able to perform this very long monologue in the required time without having to sacrifice any of my work. It is important to pick your moments, find places to pick the pace up and moments where you can allow to take those extra seconds to convey the emotions of your character at that point in the monologue.

Remember on game day to keep yourself relaxed and enjoy the experience, but let the butterflies do their work because nerves are good. It may be hard to believe but the judges want you to succeed. Don't take any notice of their reactions throughout the performance as they are there to watch closely your ability to perform and meet the criteria, so if you have a funny line, you may get a laugh, but if you don't, never let it deter you from your fantastic performance.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank my family, particularly my mum and dad who were so loving and supportive of me throughout the experience. Thank you to my tutors Tom Stammers and Anne Holt who stuck by me the whole way and brought the best work out of me. Thanks to Lisa McVilly my teacher for recommending the piece to me and her wonderful support throughout the entire year of work, and to the rest of my class, Marcellin College for their endorsement of this beautiful thing we have called art, and thanks to Top Class and the VCAA for giving me this wonderful opportunity.

I wish every single one of you who is about to take on this task the very best, and implore you to work hard and use the support of those around you. Remember to make the work your own and don't forget, the judges want you to do well. Thank you for your time, I know you will all do a fantastic job!
Thanks Daniel.

Now we have Jessica Wills performing Queen Marguerite from the same play. The monologue takes place towards the end of the play, King Berenger is now blind and deaf and he must trust his wife, Queen Marguerite to unburden him of his royal belongings and lead him to his death.

- When performing their monologues students have the option to add stage business before, during, or after their performance as long as they don’t exceed their seven minutes of performing time. They can’t add extra words but they can add actions that aren’t in the script. Many students choose to start their performance with action rather than words. Notice how Jessica has decided to start her performance by taking on the role of Berenger and then transforms into Queen Marguerite. This helps to establish the King’s presence in the scene and helps to establish the world of the play. Jessica has made clear and effective directorial decisions which enhance the absurdist style of the performance.
Thanks Jessica.

- I would like to reiterate that male and female students can play any of the characters on the monologue exam. However, you must remember that if you do so, you can’t change the gender of the character. Watch how Bridget Milesi expertly uses her acting skills to portray the role of King Berenger.

- Compare her performance to that of Daniel’s which we saw earlier. Notice the stagecraft decisions she has made and how they differ from Daniel’s and also how she uses her acting skills to portray a male role.
• Thanks Bridget.
• Now we come to our final performance for today. Stephanie Arnel is going to perform her interpretation of the ‘Herald’, the character we saw at the start of today’s concert.
• By now you should be familiar with the context of this monologue. The play, ‘Marat/Sade’ is set in the bath hall of an insane asylum some years after the French Revolution. The Marquis de Sade has written a play which is to be performed by the inmates. In this monologue the Herald introduces the actors and the parts they will play, and gives a brief summary of the plot.
• It is important to note that the Herald is a gender neutral character, meaning that it can be played as a male or female.
• In this performance pay particular attention to the wonderful directorial choices Stephanie has made which are completely different to Trent’s, whose performance of the same character began today’s concert.
• Please give a warm welcome to our final performer for today – Stephanie Arnel
Conclusion

- Well there we have it. Ten exemplary performances from the 2010 Theatre Studies Monologue examination.
- For those of you enrolled in Theatre Studies this year we hope these performances have inspired you.
- If you are sitting there right now and thinking, ‘I could never reach that standard’, it might surprise you to hear that some of the performers you saw here today have told us that they were thinking the same thing, this time last year. I am sure that next year we will be seeing some of you up here for Top Class 2012.
- I’d particularly like to thank today’s performers, and their families and friends who have supported them through this journey. It should be remembered that the exam was back in October, and that the performers today have had to re-work their monologues - and in some cases re-make their costumes, acquire new props and re-learn their lines.
- I think they have done a wonderful job today so let’s give them a thunderous round of applause as we invite them all back to the stage.