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Area of Study: Computer Science (Course 6-3)

Yesterday, I attended Ken Urban's workshop of his new play *The Immortals*. (When I say new, I mean *new*. At one point during the workshop Ken said, "I hope there aren't many typos... it was a late night.") This was my first experience at a workshop of a real, full-length play, and it was extremely interesting to observe. I am currently taking my second theater class at MIT, Playwrights' Workshop, and last semester I took Playwriting I.

During the part of the workshop that I was able to see, the cast, director, and playwright discussed the major revisions that Ken had made since the last time everyone read the script, and then the actors did a reading of the first half. Throughout the workshop, the environment in the room was relaxed and open. Actors were able to pause during the reading to understand their lines or even redo lines if they felt that they wanted to make a change in delivery. Ken would often help them with pronunciations, correct typos, or insert words he had left out. (See "late night" comment.)

Their conversation before the reading served two main purposes. Primarily, Ken explained the new changes to the characters since the last draft. The protagonist of the play had a seemingly minor edit, but Ken explained how it restructured the dramatic arc of the play and how it might influence the motivation of the character. He also explained the impact of other changes on their respective characters. These changes were all factual and detail-oriented in nature, but after Ken's explanation, the director and actors would have discussions about what this means for them.

The second purpose of their conversation was to gain a richer understanding of the world of the play. I won't give anything away, but the actors knew little of the occupation of the protagonist. They had a long discussion about what drives people to do that line of work and the different avenues that people take with it. Ken shared a real-life example that he knew of in order to make the conversation more concrete. The actors discussed this in relation to the themes of the play that they had remembered from the previous draft.

I believe watching this will be helpful with how I move forward in preparation for my own reading at the MTA Playwrights Lab. Above all else, it was obvious that the director, playwright, and actors were all thinking a lot about the characters. At one point, Ken mentioned a change in the timing of an action. The actor whose character it effected immediately jumped in and mentioned that it should change her relationship with another character. Ken had already thought that through, and added that element to one of their scenes together. To me, what was a seemingly minor detail of a character elicited thoughtful and concrete conversations about what changes would need to be made to the production. I hope that this drives me to be more holistic and thoughtful in my construction and execution of character.