



FAIL BETTER: Beckett Moves UMO

... a journey ... a love story ... with a teeter totter ... and ropes.

THE PROCESS:

First we started with **Beckett**, instigated by the Seattle Beckett Festival...we all love Beckett...

Then we started reading the prose (everyone else is doing the scripted work, right?)

Then we narrowed it down....to about 10 pieces of text;

Murphy, Molloy, First Love, Mercier and Camier, The Unnamed, How it is, Texts for Nothing, Waiting for Godot, Krapps Last Tape, Eh Joe

Then we started petitioning the Estate of Samuel Beckett for permission to use certain pieces of these texts and to recite them during the piece.

After 4 months of back and forth, we ended with permission to use one text, ***The Unnamable***; two paragraphs....VICTORY!

"I hope this preamble will soon come to an end and the statement begin that will dispose of me. Unfortunately I am afraid, as always, of going on. For to go on means going from here, means finding me, losing me, vanishing and beginning again, a stranger first, then little by little the same as always, in another place, where I shall say I have always been, of which I shall know nothing, being incapable of seeing, moving, thinking, speaking, but of which, little by little, in spite of these handicaps, I shall begin to know something, just enough for it to turn out to be the same place as always, the same which seems made for me and does not want me, which I seem to want and do not want, take your choice, which spews me out or swallows me up, I'll never know, which is perhaps merely the inside of my distant skull where once I wandered, now am fixed, lost for tininess, or straining against the walls, with my head, my hands, my feet, my back, and ever murmuring my old stories, my old story, as if it were the first time. So there is nothing to be afraid of."

-- The Unnamable, Samuel Beckett

"I'll go on. You must say words as long as there are any until they find me until they say me. (strange pain, strange sin!) You must go on, perhaps it's done already. Perhaps they have said me already. Perhaps they have carried me to the threshold of my story, before the door that opens on my story. (That would surprise me, if it opens) It will be I? It will be the silence, where I am? I don't know, in the silence you don't know. You must go on. I can't go on. I'll go on."

-- The Unnamable, Samuel Beckett

So we had our two paragraphs to frame the piece.

Then we started asking questions that arose from these two paragraphs....

- We are all a little afraid of insanity...write a 10 line circular conversation with yourself.
- What is your same old story...write it in 12 lines
- Give me a "Lucky's monologue "...think current events....
- Convince me to give you my shoes
- Tell me why you are leaving me...take your time
- Tell me why you love me...make it brief
- Where were you yesterday?
- Where are you now?
- Where are you going tomorrow?
- Who is Samuel Beckett?
- What do you regret?
- How is with different than without?

Maria Glanz and Lyam White (the most talented writers in our small tribe) began writing stream of consciousness writings from these questions.

**Then we picked 6 archetypal Beckett characters from the original source material,
found the recurring themes that arose from Beckett's writings,
found that they coalesced around 5 big movements
then we added the teeter totter and continuous rope,
and the imagined sounds from the inside of Beckett's head,
and sent them on a journey that landed them somewhere between here and there....
What you will see is that exploration.**

- Elizabeth Klob, artistic visionary of *Fail Better*, executive artist of UMO Ensemble