

From the Adapter

Throughout the course of working on this adaptation, I have been thinking a lot about the title and its implications. Great expectations lead, very often, to great disappointment. People are not who you wanted them to be, or choose what you wanted them to choose. The question is, how do you choose to bear that disappointment? Do you react with blame? Revenge? (A particularly effective revenge is to set about disappointing the expectations of others.) Depression? Do you linger in it? Fetishize the legitimacy of your disappointment?

And then there is the option, maybe the most difficult, usually the hardest won - to achieve in fits and glimpses grace: the ability to forgive and let go without bitterness, and to go on into the next expectation and its potential disappointment.

There is another, related side to the disappointment of great expectations, which is that we are sometimes directly responsible for the disappointment of the great expectations of others - usually those who love us best. These disappointments (like our own) are often unavoidable, and very often we are not even aware of what dreams we have destroyed. But when you are aware, and when the disappointment is the result of a choice you have made, what do you do next? Say nothing? Blame the holder of that expectation? Deny that the expectation was in fact ever disappointed? Or acknowledge your fault in its entirety, apologize, and do your best to not repeat the mistake?

I don't think that the title *Great Expectations* applies only to Pip and his expectations - I think that every character has their great expectations that are disappointed and great expectations that they disappoint. Each of them is forced to answer the questions I have asked, just as I in the span of creating this adaptation have had to answer them for myself. My answers in this moment are very different from the answers I would have given when I first read the novel as a teenager; I think that they are even different from how I would have answered at the end of this last December, before rehearsals began and I started exploring them with the incredible talent involved in this show. It has been nothing less than an honor to work with Book-It in bringing this novel to life, and I cannot think that it has done less than helped me come closer to answering these questions in my own life with a little more grace.

-Lucinda Stroud