

The Disappearing Monologue

This is a great exercise to establish what's important in a monologue and cut out flowery filler. A monologue doesn't have to be a five minute emotional sob fest. Long does not equal good.

Exercise

1. Write a one page monologue (typed, two pages hand written, doubled spaced) about a character remembering a parade. Put the parade at least 10 years in the past. What kind of parade was it? Why is the character remembering this parade now? Does the character often remember this parade or is this a sudden flash of memory? How does the character feel now as compared to how they felt watching the parade?
2. Re-write the monologue and cut out half a page. What can you remove and still have your character share their experience?
3. Re-write the monologue and cut out three more sentences. At this point the monologue will be very lean. How can you make sure you say what you need to in the space you have?
4. Re-write the monologue so that it is only one sentence long. What is the heart of this monologue? What is at the core of the character? You should be able to distill this into one sentence.

When writing monologues, keep this exercise in mind. The words Efficient and Effective should be at the forefront of your mind as you work. What about your monologue keeps an audience on the edge of their seats, yearning to hear every word your character says? What exactly does your character want to say? How clearly are you able to word your character's want?