Our Meet an MFA series continues today with recently graduated PATP actor Taylor Jones!
What do you know now that you didn't know when you started this program?
I feel like I really know what it takes. It takes the blood, it takes the sweat and the tears and several metric tons of hope and desire and need, and enjoyment of the craft, but what it really takes is persistence. It takes just going out over and over and over, and being okay with failure and being okay with letting yourself out there as much as you possibly can. I think that I knew that a little bit, but I didn't understand the breadth of what that really meant. Persistence. Staying after it. Staying after your goal.

I also learned that [acting] is something that really means something to me. I think I came into grad school thinking, well, it's either gonna chew me up and spit me out and I'll realize that this isn't for me, or this is gonna be something that I can actually see myself doing, and I will bloom, I will flourish, and there will be something that actually comes of this. And there was a lot of the chewing up and spitting out as well, but I think there were also certain aspects of myself that I didn't know were there, that really started to grow and germinate.

What are you most looking forward to being able to do now that you won't be in class or rehearsal 12 hours/day?
Sleeping. Sleeping on a regular schedule, sleeping more than 6 hours a night. You have a poster for the Caffé Cino over there. I remember first year, we were doing so many things at the same time, and in the winter we always had this dreariness over us with all the rain and clouds and sadness, and then we had Caffé Cino where I had to learn 13 page-and-a-half-long monologues in a week, and I had never in my life done anything to that degree, and I just sort of had to say yes, because I had no other option, it was grad school. That was definitely the toughest challenge to date in my acting career, and I just had to say, "You know what? Screw it. Let's do it." And it was a great experience—to learn that I was actually capable of that.

Any plans for after graduation?
I'm planning to stay in Seattle for at least another year. I love Seattle. I really do. I love that it's green, and it's a very outdoorsy kind of culture, and the tech world is strong, a lot of the food is really really great, and there are a lot of cool opportunities for things here that you don't get other places.

Do you have a favorite memory from your time here?
So I have a legacy here that will live on forever, or until the renovations to this building happen, (which means it will be here forever?) First year, there were a bunch of balloons that were hanging on the latticework ceiling in 202, and I threw a pillow to try to get the balloons down, but the pillow got stuck up on top of it. You can kind of see it, at certain angles you can see it, but that pillow will live there forever now, and every time I come back here I can say, "That pillow. That was me."

What piece of advice do you have for those following in your footsteps?
Be kind to yourself. Cultivate a practice of being able to recognize in yourself when you are beating yourself up and when you are saying, "Oh that was horrible." or "Why did I do that?" or "What am I going to do?"
There's also levels of dread that you experience in acting, like, "Oh no! How am I ever gonna learn all these lines? How am I ever going to remember all of these moments?" So, just giving yourself the kindness of taking one thing at a time and recognizing that it's going to happen, but also you have all of this support around you. Being able to just relieve yourself of the burden and being kind to yourself. [And you can do that] both when you're talking to yourself about something you did, or dreading something that's going to happen in the future. It's being kind to yourself about what's going on, and helping yourself to alleviate your anxieties in any way that you can.

You can learn more about Taylor by clicking here!