

SHAPING OF AMERICA PROPOSAL FORM  
SAMPLE

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**Brief Synopsis of Idea (500 words):**

(include some detail on story, structure, theme, and what this idea tells us about ourselves)

Working Title: Dying Diamonds

This play investigates our culture's obsession with celebrity and fame and how severe cases often lead to violent and unexpected events.

Marilyn Monroe (born Norma Jeane Baker) died on August 5, 1962 in her Brentwood, Los Angeles home. In 1999, she was ranked as the sixth greatest female star of all time by the American Film Institute and she has become an internationally recognizable pop icon.

The play begins with a projected clip from the film *Bus Stop*, in which Marilyn Monroe sings, "That Old Black Magic."

Setting: Monroe's Brentwood home, present-day. The lights crossfade to reveal two couples in the living room of Monroe's Brentwood house, debating who is better suited to live there. One couple, ghost hunters, hope to contact Monroe's spirit and allow the spirit to possess the woman. They hope to document the exchange for a Paranormal Activity or *The Exorcist* type film. The other couple, an up and coming Hollywood producer and his lead actress, hope to begin writing a Marilyn Monroe biopic while living in the home. The actress will star.

For a price, the realtor allows the couples to stay in the house together for one night and report back to him what happens to them.

The ghost hunters settle in for their night in the house and begin watching "Some Like It Hot." The projection screen descends with a clip from "Some Like It Hot" that becomes Marilyn Monroe speaking directly to them. They have a conversation with her from the screen and fall asleep in the living room.

The Hollywood couple decides to spend their night writing the first scene of their screenplay. They set up in the dining room and begin, as they begin all writing sessions, with a game of Yahtzee. As they continue playing, something unseen begins to push the bubble and move a piece on the board. As the game progresses, Marilyn Monroe appears and plays with them.

A clip of Marilyn singing “River of No Return” plays as the lights dim. End of Act One.

At the opening of Act Two, both couples wake the next morning, in the same rooms with the same clothes as the night before. However, the women wake with bleach blonde Marilyn Monroe-style coifs. Thrilled by this odd supernatural occurrence, they all pay the realtor to allow them to stay one more night.

On their second night, the women begin dosing themselves with sleeping pills and alcohol and both appear in versions of Monroe’s famous dress from “The Seven Year Itch.” The men fight with their spouses in dialogue similar to the verbal battle Joe DiMaggio and Monroe publicly had during the filming of “The Seven Year Itch.”

As the real Marilyn enters, both couples crumple to the ground. Marilyn sings, “After You Get What You Want.” And the lights dim.

The next scene, the LAPD is interrogating the realtor after discovering the four dead bodies. End of Play.