

Spring 3-31-1988

Landscape of the Body postcard

Department of Theatre, Florida International University

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L O A F N T D H S E C B A O P D E Y



FIU Theatre presents

LANDSCAPE OF THE BODY by John Guare

John Guare was once called the "oldest living most promising playwright." With **Landscape of the Body** and its unique understanding of the American character, soul, and life drives, Guare establishes himself as one of our premiere playwrights.

Mixing all sorts of dramatic genres to tell his story, Guare uses techniques of the silent movies, the film noir thriller, musical comedy, and family drama. These structural techniques along with Guare's wit, keen sense of parody, and use of music emanate both from his desire to "find new forms to encompass this huge country," and his "Irish-on-all-sides" heritage. Blend Eugene O'Neill and Woody Allen, add dashes of Georges Feydeau and August Strindberg—and you have John Guare.

Landscape of the Body explores the immense diversity of the ways we urban dwellers fight to preserve life and battle death. Guare theatrically and musically brings to life the trials and horrific tribulations of a family—sisters Betty and Rosalie, and Betty's young son, Bert—trying to adapt to the rigors and terrors of life in New York City. The tale is narrated by Rosalie, a blowsy, good sport of a gal, who might have been another Ethel Merman—or could it be Gypsy Rose Lee?—if only the right breaks had come her way.

We follow Betty and Bert as they struggle to find out about themselves and maintain the illusion that all is not rotten on Christopher Street in Greenwich Village. A host of wonderfully wacky characters whirl about the mother and son: Raulito, a macho Cuban travel agent who has fashioned his American persona from Hollywood film and TV images; Durwood Peach, a Southern gentleman whose life's mission is to "pursue the unattainable," and Marvin Holahan, a NYC detective energized by trivia games, and the dogged pursuit of a city's crooks!

Film director Louis Malle, for whom Guare scripted ATLANTIC CITY, best analyzes the characters of **Landscape of the Body**:

"They go all the way, exposing their fears, their contradictions, their false identities. They sing us a lyrical song, interrupted by screams and laughter...Guare practices a humor that is synonymous with lucidity."

Landscape of the Body celebrates love's intimacy, protecting us from the night terrors and daytime loneliness of our city lives. Each character passionately strives to form a family with strangers, no matter how bizarre the necessary methods or unusual the relationships.

There are calls for help in **Landscape of the Body**. We laugh at them; we cringe. We recognize and embrace them because they are the cries we make.

March 31, April 1-3, 7-10, 8:00 pm.

Sunday performances begin at 7:00 pm.

University Theatre, VH 100, University Park

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