

AMERICAN BURLESQUE NUTCRACKER

About the Play

American Burlesque is a satiric vaudeville that examines history, culture, whiteness, race, gender and sexuality and challenges us to (re) examine dominant spectatorship and its possible consequences in a white-dominant Capitalistic America. Through the eyes of an impressionable and highly - imaginative young boy, *American Burlesque* asks us to consider how cultural stereotyping, appropriation, deracination and re-inscription misreads history for ideological purposes by debasing “authentic” experience and identity. Also, its scrutiny of a specific cultural and ideological place of the penis and, perhaps, a young boy’s castration anxiety, *American Burlesque* is a provocative play and will be challenging to many. But above all, it explores in a very concentrated manner a real issue in America (and all transnational societies) - how ideology is encoded in texts and the erasure of identity in a society that values monetary worth over the individual. *American Burlesque* is a *play with music*, performed vaudeville style with toy or made instruments. The songs fall under public domain (“Stars and Stripes”) or free use parody. “Steal A March” is original and is sung spoken to toy instruments. This is not a musical per se, but other public domain songs, if thematically relevant, can be added. Certain roles are doubled for thematic/story continuity. *American Burlesque* should be staged with (ideally) as large a (multi ethnic) cast and as imaginatively as budget allows and ideally, intermission-less. Scenic design should be inspired by Joseph Cornell, Fellini, Disney, Busby Berkeley, and Jules Verne. This is a play for interpretive and inventive ensemble companies.