

THE NEO-FUTURISTS PRESENT:

The United States Invasion and Occupation
of
Afghanistan
and
Iraq

Collected plays from 2001 - 2021

by RACHEL CLAFF, Heather Ridordan, Connor Kalista,
Genevra Gallo, Diana Slickman, Noelle Krumm,
Ryan Welters, Joe Dempsey, Chloe Johnston, Ro White
Jay Torrence, Sharon Greene, Kristie Koehlen Vuocolo
Bilal Dardai, Jonathan Mastro, Dina Connolly Wadlers,
Steve Mosqueda, Tim Reid, Kurt Chiang,
Lily Mooney, Trent Lunsford, ██████████

"Americans Need to Watch What They Say, Watch What They Do,
and This Is Not a Time for Remarks Like That; There Never Is"

© October 2001 Claff

Unclear on the staging at the moment. I'd like everyone onstage doing something that underscores the text; perhaps panning the audience with scooplights or big flashlights. RC sitting in a chair maybe facing upstage, hit by a scooplight? Text is delivered fairly quickly.

RC: There are terrorists in this world. There are terrorists in this country. There are terrorists in our neighborhoods. There are terrorists trying to frighten us into submission. There are terrorists trying to take away our freedom and we will not stand for it. There are terrorists who fly airplanes into buildings. There are terrorists hiding in the mountains. There are terrorists living next door. There are terrorists hiding in your garage. There are terrorists lurking in the bushes. There are terrorists who build weapons of chemical warfare. There are terrorists using our telephone systems and our email. There are terrorists watching you leave your house. There are terrorists on buses. There are terrorists on trains. There are terrorists on CNN. There are terrorists writing newspaper columns. There are terrorists discussing the likelihood of biological warfare with Barbara Walters on *The View*. There are terrorists telling Bill Maher what he can and cannot say. There are terrorists telling everyone in your office about terrorists sending poison through the mail. There are terrorists harassing school teachers for not displaying American flags in their classrooms. There are terrorists hawking gas masks on eBay. There are terrorists kicking three Arab-American men off an airplane because the other passengers refused to fly with them. There are terrorists in the Congress trying to pass bills that would give law enforcement officials easier access to wiretapping and monitoring your use of the Internet without a warrant. There are terrorists in this world. There are terrorists in this country. There are terrorists in our neighborhoods. There are terrorists trying to frighten us into submission. There are terrorists trying to take away our freedom and we will not stand for it.

CURTAIN

Anonymous

© 2001 H.A. Riordan

I don't usually watch the television. Unless someone has taped the Simpsons, I don't usually turn it on. But like everyone, I watched on Tuesday. I couldn't not watch. And I cried. And I worried about my friends in New York, and the people I know who work for American & United. And then I saw, on the videotape, just a blip on the screen, of something, someone, falling, having jumped, from 50 flights or so, someone jumping. I hope, for the sake of that person's family, that that person remains anonymous. That no one ever knows. I've never seen anything so abject. I can't imagine, the last moment of anyone's life, forced to make a decision about how to die, the fire or the fall. I can't imagine that amount of terror. I just can't imagine any of it being real.

"Whose Broad Stripes and Bright Stars?" (Anthem)
Alternate Text

© RC 2001

I can't pray. I wouldn't know what God to invoke, if any.

I can't be proud. I was never very proud of us to begin with

I can't sing. Well. I can sing. Just not the songs I keep hearing. I don't even know most of the words.

I can't be angry, or make jokes about turbans and caves and sand. I can't wave things, or unfurl things, or display things, or throw things. Especially not that.

Where does that leave me?

Red with shame.

White with fear,

and Blue.

Just Blue.

CURTAIN

As Goes Sylvester, So Too Goes America

©2001 Connor Kalista

Each statement is read, perhaps in fade-ups of a spot.

From Leonard Maltin's 2001 Movie and Video Guide: Rambo III, 1988, two-and-a-half stars. A definite improvement over Part II. Our brawny hero teams up with Afghan freedom fighters to fight the Soviets. Lots of explosions to keep things lively.

In London's Sunday Times, November 11, 2001: Sylvester Stallone is reported to be working on a script for Rambo 4. When asked to describe the film, Stallone said "Former Green Beret John Rambo parachutes into Afghanistan to battle leaders of the Taliban."

Certain Things Sound Different Now
© 2001 Genevra Gallo

As she speaks, Genevra folds a paper airplane...

Airplanes
Fire engines
Police sirens
Helicopters
"How are you?"
"I love you"
"Tomorrow..."
Truth
Telephones
School bells
Laughter
Music
Screaming
Tragedy
Terror
"... at war"
Your silence

Genevra launches the airplane into the audience.

Curtain

...And Andy Bayiates as Saddam Hussein

© 2002 Diana Slickman

Joe, Diana and Andy on stage. Andy stands to one side, Diana and Joe to the other.

Joe: Hey, Diana, look who's over there.

Diana: You mean Andy?

Joe: Yeah, Andy. That asshole.

Diana: You think he's an asshole?

Joe: He's bad! He's, he's, he's bad! It's a known fact.

Diana: A known fact?

Joe: He is demonstrable, desmontrob, [He is stumbling over the word "demonstrably", changes tack:] It's been shown. That he's bad. For everybody.

Diana: I agree he sometimes doesn't do exactly as one would have him do, but he's certainly not bothering anyone right now.

Joe: You want me to beat him up for you?

Diana: What? No.

Joe: Let me beat him up for you. I'll kill him.

Diana: I said no. What are you talking about? Why would you want to do that?

Joe: [Becoming really agitated now.] I'll kill him! I'm going to take him out! Watch out, Andy, here comes Mr. Dempsey to clean your clock! You can't treat Diana like that!

Diana: Joe! Joe! Stop it! Stop that! Are you trying to impress me? Do you think this will make me like you? Do you think this will make you popular with anyone? Do you think this will make up for all the other shit you are doing in the show? Or what? What are you thinking? Stop it now. Stop.

Joe: Well, I'll consider it a little more *be for* I do anything.

Diana: Do nothing. Leave Andy alone. Let's do something else. Let's talk about something else.

Joe: It's okay, I'm okay now. [There is a long pause. Quietly, to Andy:] I've got your number, pal. Just a matter of time.

Curtain

And now, yet another obvious and angry play about our
friends at the White House

in NK 2002

NK: Back in my college days at Florida State University, I remember seeing Jeb Bush in a campus parade. Homecoming, I think. He was running for Governor, you know. They put him on a float behind the gay pride float. All the men on the gay pride float were so well-built and scantily clad.

RW: They probably made ol' Jeb look even more stuffy and bloated than usual.

NK: Oh... you're so naughty. (*they laugh together as JD brings NK some champagne*)
Thank you, dear. How lovely. (*RW wants some champagne as well but Joe leaves*)
Anywho, he got elected and came up with this terrific plan to revamp the educational system.
He gave more funding to the private schools and took money away from the public schools as punishment for poor performance. But then all these people said it was unconstitutional. Isn't that funny?

RW: Uh... yeah, I guess. (*RW sort-of half laughs with NK to be polite*)

Dude

NK: Fortunately, ~~Bubba~~ realized it was a good idea because his plan for the education system is really similar and involves, among other things, a 4 billion dollar funding increase for private schools.

RW: Well, that's pretty funny.

NK: I'm sorry. Was that sarcasm? Oh, it was. How cute. (*she laughs. JD comes back in*)
Oh, listen, could you add a dash of orange juice? And something for my friend.

RW: I'll have the same. (*JD leaves*) So I guess all those public school students in Government class will be able to learn first hand the grand old tradition of politicians helping the rich get richer while keeping the poor poor and uneducated.

NK: Which is good since they won't be able to afford text books. (*NK laughs*) I made a joke!
(*JD comes back with NK's drink and a cheap can of beer for Ryan*) Thanks so much!

public school

RW: Oh....OK....well, thanks. Look, here's the question. Do you think those kids will learn the REASON behind that "grand old tradition?"

NK: I think they'll learn one reason first hand.

RW: When they get to college?

NK: No, silly. When they get to Iraq. (*RW laughs, NK just smiles- JD comes out with a packed army duffle bag and drops it at RW's feet, RW stops laughing*)

RW: Oh shit. (*He reluctantly picks up the bag and JD points for him to carry it offstage R*)

NK: Ta! Could I get some more of this? This was lovely.

CURTAIN

after all

© 2002 Rachel Claff/Genevra Gallo

There are four set stations, with activity at each station, and two people who move freely through all of the activity, ripping pages out of old books and letting the scraps float to the floor. There is possibly light music underneath – an underscoring. Something from the Sonos Handbell Ensemble.

Station 1:

Someone at the chalkboard, up right. Someone is writing on the board methodically. They have a booklight clipped to a clipboard, which provides their source of light. They are writing statistics on the board in the form of a table/chart. (See attached for chart).

Station 2:

Someone sitting on the floor, down right – slightly left of the person at the board. This person is taking a penlight and shining it randomly on various body parts – using the light to focus on specific limbs, etc. (e.g., torso, hand, lips, right foot, etc.). This person does this activity in silence.

Meanwhile, someone else is doing the same thing, but is roaming freely as they light themselves. They can enter the audience, go behind the house left or right seats, etc. This person whispers as they move, is silent when they shine the light on a body part. They can whisper whatever they would like: a prayer, a list of things they ate that day, where they were on 9/11, the books they've read lately, etc.

Station 3:

Someone sitting on the lip, slightly right of center. This person is reading aloud from a book. Softly – not quite a whisper, but also not full voice. The book has a cliplight attached that provides that person's source of light. The text the person is reading is from Eduardo Galeano's 1984 publication: *Memory of Fire*. (See attached for text)

Station 4:

Someone standing on a chair, down right. This person is lit by one of the City Girl flashlights that is angled up and locked in the "on" position. He/she drops white feathers to the ground steadily.

How it proceeds:

In darkness, the paper rippers start tearing... after 5 seconds or so of just that sound, the stations turn on their lights one by one and begin their activities. They turn on their lights and begin in this order:

1. The book person turns on the light and begins reading.
2. The person at the board turns on the light and starts writing.
3. The penlight people turn on their lights and begin moving (either in place or around the space – as assigned).
4. The feather person turns on the light, gets on the chair, and starts dropping feathers.

The activities continue until the book reader says the following: "... so they should know the movements of the stars... ". When the paper tearers hear this, they come together center stage and fold themselves together – a sort of holding/folding/hiding/comforting.

As they do this, the moving penlight person goes over and lays his/her head in the book person's lap, which stops the reading.

The person at the board walks over to the penlight person on the floor and touches him/her, which also stops the activity.

When the paper tearers stop moving, the following people switch positions:

1. The penlight mover takes the books and starts reading. The book person takes the penlight and goes to the stationary penlight spot.
2. The board and stationary penlight people trade tasks. The board person starts doing the moving penlight activity.
(The feather person does not move.)

The activity starts again and, once the book reader says: "*Will not what they painted be sung and danced through the times of the times?*" , the lights go off in this order:

1. The stationary penlight turns off.
2. The person at the board turns off the light and stops writing.
3. The moving penlight person exits (and turns off the light).
4. The book reader finishes the text and turns off the light.

The feather person does not stop.

Curtain

Station 3 text:

Tonight, eight centuries of literature turn to ashes. On these long sheets of bark paper, signs and images spoke: They told of work done and days spent, of the dreams and the wars of a people born before Christ. With hog-bristle brushes, the knowers of things had painted these illuminated, illuminating books so that the grandchildren's grandchildren should not be blind, should know how to see themselves and see the history of their folk, so they should know the movements of the stars, the frequency of eclipses and the prophecies of the gods and so they could call for rains and good corn harvests.

Meanwhile, the authors, artist-priests dead years or centuries ago, drink chocolate in the fresh shade of the first tree of the world. They are at peace, because they died knowing that memory cannot be burned. Will not what they painted be sung and danced through the times of the times?

When its little paper houses are burned, memory finds refuge in mouths that sing the glories of men and of gods, songs that stay on from people to people and in bodies that dance to the sound of hollow trunks, tortoise shells, and reed flutes.

* This text was found at <http://www.rose.brandeis.edu/users/dgm/Galeano.html>

Station 1 chart:

Person writes the following on the board:

Should the United States invade Iraq?

Time	Responses	Yes	No	with UN support
10:00	13912	35%	32%	34%
10:21	14752	35%	32%	34%
10:35	15295	35%	31%	34%
10:40	15562	35%	31%	34%
10:57	16298	35%	31%	34%
11:37	18056	35%	31%	34%
12:00	18984	35%	31%	34%
12:29	20083	35%	31%	34%
1:43	22273	35%	31%	34%

* This is taken from a live opinion poll on msn.com, the morning of Sept. 10, 2002.

Death Knell
© 2002 Genevra Grano

Across the stage (right to left) sit NK, CJ, RC, and HR. Each one has a bell in front of her.

NK: In Afghanistan, a woman dies every 20 minutes from complications during pregnancy and childbirth.

CJ: That means that three women will have died during the course of this show.

NK, CJ, and RC ring their bells, one at a time.

RC: Another woman will die by the time you all exit the theatre.

NK rings her bell.

HR: And another 21 women will die before 8 o'clock Saturday morning.

If a Saturday show: And another 21 women will die before 8 o'clock Sunday morning.

If a Sunday show: And another 10 women will die before midnight tonight.

They ring their bells the appropriate number of times, starting with NK.

NK: Each year, only one baby in four reaches its first birthday.

Three rings, starting with NK.

CJ: In rural Afghanistan 7 out of 100 women die each year.

Seven rings, starting with NK.

RC: 90% of these deaths could be prevented with basic, medical care.

HR: Because of inadequate medical care and second-class citizen status, women in Afghanistan are 130 times more likely to die from childbirth than women in the United States.

Bells ring again, starting with NK... we call curtain before they reach 130 (perhaps we get through at least 20 rings) – they are interrupted by:

Curtain

Unilateral Action

Archive

Ryan Walters 2002

The 3 spots are up on stage. Neo Futurists walk out on stage and start to write words on the floor in and around the spots. Once their word is written they start drawing lines between each word.

On the floor:

Israel
Palestine
Afghanistan
Weapons Inspectors
Sanctions
Iraq
Alquida
Saddam
Sharon
Arafat

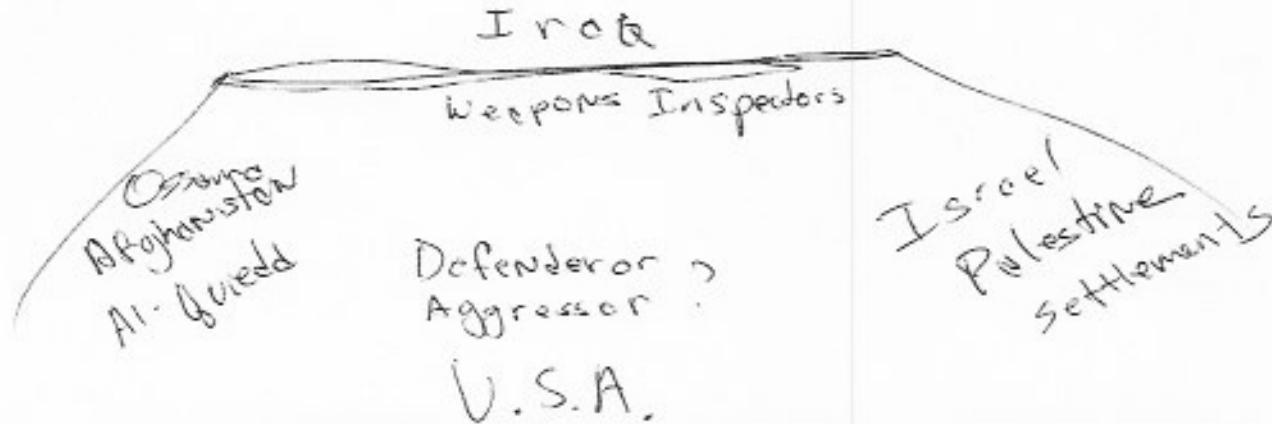
On Chalkboard

USA

After USA is written Neo's writing words on floor begin to draw lines to USA on board. They are stopped by Neofuturist walking out with a water balloon and stands behind the word Iraq. Rest of Neofutursits look up at NF with water balloon and shake their heads no. NF with water balloon looks at them doesn't respond, raises water balloon above head and throws it at the word Iraq. Blackout when water balloon hits floor. Music stops. All exit. Lights up. Beat

Curtain

A world of preemptive
strikes is a world
of perpetual war



Can't We All Just Get Along? (No, and Here's Why!)

Joe Dempsey © 2003

Joe is centerstage with a clipboard. Other NFists to the sides counting hands, judging responses with clipboards. Throughout NFists consult with one another about trends they see in the audience, etc.

JOE Please raise your hands if you generally agree with the following statements. Know that this play will not be over until each and every hand is raised. You are not to lie. You are not to go along to get along or to end this play. You are not to be intentionally difficult. You are merely to tell the truth. Don't fuck with the truth. If you fuck with the truth, the truth has a way of fucking with you. Let's begin.

The war with Iraq is a good idea.

The war with Iraq is a bad idea.

George Bush is our leader and we should support him.

George Bush stole the election and is an idiot and the tragic attacks of 9/11 did not magically turn him into a capable president.

Saddam Hussein is a brutal tyrant who needs to be ousted and the credibility of the United Nations is at stake.

If Iraq's major export was kumquats, we would not give a shit about Saddam Hussein.

Those fucking French frogs. Oh, how I hate them. If it weren't for us, they'd be speaking German.

I don't hate the French because of their anti-war stance. I hate them because they think Jerry Lewis is a genius.

If there hasn't been a unanimous showing yet:

Joe, this is a farce. It is all too apparent what your opinions are on these matters and the questions have been skewed to reflect that. We hate you and the other Neo-Futurists should put you through a paddling machine.

Don't listen to them, Joe! You are wise beyond your 26 years. The Neo-Futurists are lucky to have you and should fall to their knees in praise of you.

It looks like we might be here all night. Let's move on to less divisive topics: We love all the Neo-Futurists and would willingly take a bullet for their continued prosperity.

We love the Neo-Futurists and would willingly take a solid punch in the arm for their continued prosperity.

We love the Neo-Futurists and would willingly take a handshake and/or a hug from one of them for their continued prosperity.

We love the Neo-Futurists.

We like the Neo-Futurists.

We see a Neo-Futurist.

The questions keep going until there is a unanimous answer.

Curtain

Have You Forgotten?

© Chloë Johnston (2003)

The play starts with everyone onstage, and over the course of the first few lines we climb into the audience. One person has a ball of yarn, they wrap the end around their wrist and toss it to the next person, who does the same until the whole cast is connected. We could either stretch this process so it takes the length of the whole play, or we could start, tossing it to the audience with the expectation that they join the web.

HR

GG: In September of 2001, two planes flew into the World Trade Center in New York City. A third plane flew into the Pentagon in Washington and a fourth crashed in a field in Pennsylvania.

RW

SM: In October of 2001, the United States began a bombing campaign in Afghanistan to route out followers of the Al Qaeda organization and their leader, Osama Bin Laden, who had claimed responsibility for the attack.

RC: Osama Bin Laden has never been caught.

JT: In 2002, the United States government accused Iraq of being part of the Axis of Evil, and accused its leader, Saddam Hussein of hiding weapons of mass destruction.

CJ: On March 19, 2003, the United States began its attack on Iraq. It ended about six weeks later.

DC

SH: Saddam Hussein has never been caught. No nuclear weapons have been found in Iraq.

HR

GG: 46 percent of Americans believe there is a connection between the government of Saddam Hussein and the attacks of September 11.

RW

SM: The United States government has never made an official statement linking Iraq with the attacks of September 11.

5

RC: Three weeks ago, the first multi-million dollar contract was awarded in the process of rebuilding Iraq.

JT: The United States government awarded this contract to Bechtel, a global construction and engineering group.

CJ: For this first phase of the contract, the U.S. government will pay Bechtel almost thirty-five million dollars to help reconstruct Iraq's roads, railroads, airports, hospitals, schools, water systems and electrical systems.

DC

SH: Experts predict the cost could reach six hundred million dollars in the next year and a half.

HR

GG: The Bechtel family is also the major owner of an investment company called The Fremont Group.

RW

SM: The family of Osama Bin Laden has a ten million dollar stake in The Fremont Group.

RC: The general counsel lawyer for The Fremont Group has said, "Ownership is private and not disclosed."

JT: There are connections that are invisible but real.

CJ: There are connections that imagined but seen.

~~DC~~: There are connections that are no stronger than a piece of yarn.

~~HR~~: Would you like to decide which are which?

Tech

Archive

How We Learned About America

Ryan Walters 2008

Everyone would write down a short paragraph telling something about themselves relating to the concept of America, the Flag, Patriotism, the war, their experiences. Probably a memory. They would be put in a hat, and 2 or 3 would be drawn randomly each night before the show. The cards picked would be read over the voice over mike by the rest of the cast, while the person they are about sit in a spot light on stage. If we did 3 we would use each of the 3 specials, and the lights would fade from one special to the next as the cards were read. Maybe music would play.

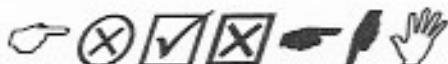
My examples:

When Ryan was 4 and in daycare at the Mary Moppits day care center on Vine St. in Lincoln, Nebraska he remembers learning that the American flag should never touch the ground and if it did the only way to clean it was to burn it. Every morning a different kid held the flag while everyone said the Pledge of Allegiance. When it was Ryan's turn he decided to touch the flag to the ground to see if they would really burn it, as he lowered the flag he remembers the rest of the kids kind of rushing up around him to stop him. It kind of happened in slow motion. He is pretty sure they never burned the flag.

Or

When Ryan was in 1st grade the Iran hostages were released and he remembers watching them walk down off a 747. He was in the kitchen and his parents were doing some kind of tile work to the floor. Somehow he had gotten glue on his shirt. The next day at school there was an assemble in the gym and they handed out 3x5 card with the date and an American Flag sticker on the back. He remembers it being a big deal and being sad. It was at least 5 years before he lost that card.

The play ends after 3 cards have been read.



American Girl Place
Jay Torrence © 2003

Five speakers enter and exit stage while the American girl place people stay and hold choreographed poses during quesiton lines. American girl place people are like broadway child stars, smiling too much and over enthusiastic. Annoying, like those kids on Barney.

SB: What if I want to spend a lot of money to buy my child a doll?

NK: Come to American Girl Place!

SM: What if I want to spend a lot more money to buy new outfits for my child AND her new doll so that they can dress exactly alike?

NK, KK: (stand back to back with "child star" like enthusiasm) Come to American Girl Place!

CJ: What if I want to spend even more money to get my new doll's hair styled...by a professional doll hair stylist...for professional doll hair prices...at a professional Doll hair salon?

KK, NK, AB, GG: (andy and genvra join them carrying dolls and all hit a broadway picture pose, over the top sensation) Come to American Girl Place!

JT: What if I want to spend more money on a plastic doll than it would cost to feed an actual starving child for a whole year?

KK, NK, AB, GG: (more "photo op" poses) Come to American Girl Place!

SB: What if I want to buy an Iraqi doll? (beat) With missing limbs?

KK, NK, AB, GG: (depending on doll, maybe arms are removed) Come to American Girl Place!

SM: What if my Iraqi doll gets hungry cuz she has no food?

KK, NK, AB, GG: (pose) Come to American Girl Place!

CJ: What if I get tired of having to feed my armless Iraqi doll?

KK, NK, AB, GG: Come to American Girl Place.

JT: (approaches KK, NK, AB, GG) What if I want to buy my Iraqi doll a pair of american arms cuz I feel responsible for blowing off her Iraqi arms? Oh and what if I want sprinkles on my ice cream?

KK: come to...

NK: come to...

AB: come to...

GG: Come to...

KK, NK, AB, GG: American Girl Place!!! Yeah! (out of breath)

Black out. Curtain

LIBERATE ME. DEMOCRATE ME.

Jay Torrence © 2003

JAY IS SITTING ON STAGE EATING A DONUT. ONE ENTERS. ALL ENTRANCES AND EXITS ARE
ST AND TIGHT. PERSON IS BOMBARDED WITH PEOPLE.

GG
Heather: (to audience member) You look really uncomfortable sitting there. I know those seats aren't comfortable. Here come stand here and have a donut. (brings them on stage gives them one of Jay's donuts, exits)

Jay: (takes a beat or two to acknowledge audience member and bite a donut)

Do you like donuts? What kind of donuts do you like?

(If they say no then: "if you did like donuts what kind would like?")

Do you want a donut? Well, we don't have any! (exits, RC enters) They're gone, they're all gone!

Rachel: (kind and apologetic) I'm sorry, you seem uncomfortable. Do you want a chair.

Will it help if I give you a chair?

One of our chairs? (offers Jay's chair and audience can sit or stand, exits as Sean enters)

Sean: What are you doing with that chair? (steve enters)

Did YOU make that chair? Where'd you get it? (sean continues to say things under steve:

"huh? Where'd you get it? I'm talking to you. Hey! Look at me")

Steve: Hey, weren't you sitting over there and now your sitting here? Why are all these people sitting down? Did you do this? Did you tell them to sit down?

Sean: Give me the chair. (takes the chair)

Steve: Did you ask them or tell them?

Sean: Where'd you put the other chairs?

Steve: Maybe, they'd rather stand.

Sean: I know you have other chairs.

Steve: Maybe, they're tired of sitting.

Sean: Give me all the chairs.

BOTH EXITING

Steve: What? You're the only one allowed to stand?

Sean: You chair maker. You stupid chairmaker.

(Genevra enters with a chair).

Genevra:

Hi, Don't be afraid. I'm here to set you free. (puts down chair) Sit down. You look really tired. You should sit down now. It's been so hard for you, I know. You're free now. Sit down. You're free.

(Exiting) Sit in the God Dam chair like everyone else.

RC

Heather: (enters with a glass of water, offers it to audience member but refuses to let them have it) Hi you look thirsty. Are you thirsty? Do you want a drink? You look really thirsty. I bet you're thirsty. Do you want a drink? Here take it. Take it. Do you want a drink?

JAY ENTERS WITH A WATER GUN AND HOLDS AT AUDIENCE MEMBERS HEAD

Jay: Open your mouth.

Heather: Do you want a drink?

Jay: Open your mouth

Heather: Are you thirsty?

Jay: Open your mouth.

Heather: You're free now.

Jay: Open your mouth

Heather: You can do what you want.

Jay: Open your mouth

Heather: You're free now.

Jay: Open your mouth.

Heather: It's just a gun.

Jay: Open your mouth.

Heather: Do you trust me? (wait a beat) You're free now.

HEATHER THROWS WATER AT JAY'S FACE AND JAY SQUIRTS GUN AIMLESSLY AROUND

CURTAIN

My Mother Always Said

Sharon Greene ©2003

Three spotlights, three small tables, SR, SC, and SL.
Three women stand behind the tables, each with a laundry basket on their hip. They put down the baskets, take a U.S. Army shirt out of their basket and begin to fold the shirt on the table.

Woman 1: My mother always said

W2: When you do the laundry yourself

W3: You aren't so careless with your clothes.

The women turn the folded shirts sideways on the table. They reach onto their baskets and bring out Army caps. They put the caps down above the collars of the shirts. They get American flags from their baskets and drape them over the tables.

W1: Maybe it's time to have a Doctor as our President.

CURTAIN

Reading Between the Lines (what that very serious fireman in that very serious commercial is REALLY telling us)

I can't decide if i should do this or if it should be a man like in the commercial. If not me, maybe Jay is in a spot, wearing a fireman's helmet and looking really serious

X: The threat is very real. Not just in New York or Chicago but in the small towns, too. There is no place to go to be safe. You should be afraid - fear will protect you. Fear will keep you from noticing when our government makes another move to take away basic civil liberties. Fear will keep you from investigating the real reasons behind the war. You should be full of fear while our leader remains steadfast and calm. When you look at him through the filter you create with your fingers during horror movies, he looks so much better - so much stronger - almost intelligent....almost. And that will surely take care of any wavering there may be in his approval rating right now. A big warm blanket of fear will cover Saddam Hussein and Osama Bin Laden and make them look like one person. One big scary person. (someone screams behind the risers) Whoa. Did that scare you? It should have. I'm pretty sure someone white and blonde was just killed by someone from the middle east. They do that, you know.
Are you sufficiently frightened? If not, you should log onto www.ready.gov. They'll scare the shit out of you....for your own good.
(wink)

Acknowledgments

The Untitled Day After

© Kristie Koehler, November 3, 2004

(All in semicircle facing blue TV screen that is turned on, lip center stage. In Chairs, backs to audience)

- 1: Did you sit there in disbelief?
- 2: Cleary HALF of your fellow Americans Support him.
- 3: 51% is a majority.
- 4: Winning the popular vote this time
- 5: NOT by 500, but by 4 million.
- 1: Did you wonder at any moment in the last few days...
- 2: That just maybe you've been brainwashed.
- 3: That those liberals who surround you.
- 4: Have subversively caused you to lose touch with the True Pulse of America?
- 5: Are you so damn liberal
- 1: That you lost touch with the fear
- ALL: 51%
62%
54%
- 2: that state after state bought into and validated?
- ALL: (*turn around*) ARE YOU SO DAMN LIBERAL, SO DAMN COMMIE PINKO LIBERAL?
- 3: That you've lost touch with Americans' true priorities
- 1: (*turn around*) Priority #1 - pre-emptive strikes
- 3: (*turn around*) Priority #1 - power of arrogance
- 5: (*turn around*) Priority #1 - American Democracy for ALL Arabs
- 2: Because you know
- 4: Well, maybe you didn't...
- ALL: (*turn around*) THAT FREEDOM IS CLEARLY ON THE MARCH.
- 1: Did you sit there and think for a moment,

- 2: That in these last two years you must have been wrong.
- 3: That perhaps you've misjudged the whole situation?
- 4: That maybe you *are* still living in a 9/10 world.
- 5: That maybe somewhere in his lies, lay the truth.
- ALL: (*turn around*) Did you think at anytime *maybe they're right?*
- 1: My God! Are you like the boy in the Liberal Bubble?
- 2: Quote from friend and Ohio Native:
- 3: (*turn around and stand*) I know that the president reads more than I do. He has the resources to know more about what's going on in the world than I could begin to imagine. Because of that, I trust our leader will do what is best."
- 4: (looking up at 3) Did you think just for a moment that your liberal thinking has taken away your ability to trust?
- ALL: (*turn around*) Conspiracy theory replaces the trust. (sadistic laughter here)
- 1: Did you think just for a moment that you were
- 2,4: (*turn around*) MISGUIDED.
- 3: To think *it is better* to lead this country in a way that protects your children's children, rather than yourself?
- 2,4: (*turn around*) THINKING SEVEN GENERATIONS HEAD. WHAT CRAP.
- 1: Did you think just for a moment that you were
- 2,4: (*turn around*) FOOLISH
- 5: To believe that we needed a leader who made sure that America would be ok in the times when WE ARE NOT...
- 2,3,4: (*turn around*) King of the hill. Top of the Heap.
- 1: Did you think just for a moment that somehow you missed it?
- 3: That clearly the RIGHT WAY must be...
- ALL: Attack. Occupy. Invade. Defeat.
- 5: Do what we can. Now. For us. While we are A#1.
- 1: I mean how could 51% of Americans be wrong?

Operation Iraqi Arithmetic

© 2004 Bilal Dardai

DC writes on the chalkboard as BD dictates from a notecard.

BD: August 29, 2004. President Bush admits in an interview with the *New York Times* that he made "a miscalculation of what the conditions would be" in postwar Iraq.

(All numbers are up-to-date as of July 20th; I will attempt to update the script with new information if available.)

BD: 1,018 coalition troops dead.

DC: Plus.

BD: 5,084 coalition troops wounded.

DC: Plus.

BD: Thirteen thousand Iraqi dead.

DC: Plus.

BD: Forty thousand Iraqi wounded.

DC: Plus.

BD: One hundred twenty six billion dollars. American.

DC: Minus...

BD: One despot.

DC: Equals.

BD: I don't know, I really don't know. August 29, 2004, President Bush admits that he made a miscalculation of what the conditions would be in postwar Iraq.

Might I suggest, Mr. President, that if you attempt something like this again, be it Syria or Iran or wherever else might strike your fancy, might I suggest. THAT YOU DOUBLE CHECK YOUR FUCKING MATH NEXT TIME.

CURTAIN

ARCHIVE

When They Find You In Your Hole, You'll Look Like Santa Clause

Ryan Walters 2004

(Andy in spot wearing a Santa hat)

Why did Saddam Hussein look like Santa Clause when they captured him. I feel sorry for him. Even with war crimes and crimes against humanity I still feel sorry for him. I feel sorry for the people of Iraq.

And I still don't like George Bush, but I feel sorry for him too. I think poor little Georgy Bush. He probably got beat up by all the other politicians kids growing up. I can see him rushing to his mother crying with a bloody nose and her putting Neosporin on his cut knee and saying:

(Andy and Chloe in spot. Chloe is comforting Andy.)

Chloe: Ohh, Georgy it's going to be okay. One day your going to be the President , and then you can make them all pay for what they did to you.

Maybe that's why he seems so full of hate and rage. He claims to be a religious man. There was even a picture of him leading his cabinet in prayer on the cover of the Tribune, but all I see is a crazy old man with a lust for revenge.

And I imagine when George Bush isn't re-elected or God forbid his 2nd term is up, the new President's staff will have to search through the white house trying to find the holed up hiding Ex-President and they'll pull him kicking and screaming out of a broom closet right out onto Pennsylvania Avenue.

(Andy is pulled off stage wearing a Santa hat. He is yelling don't make me leave. I don't want to go and so on.)

And he'll look a little bit like Santa Clause.

CURTAIN

3/19/03: two years later, how much wiser?

© 2005 Genevra Gallo

This is two plays with the same title. The first time it is pulled the following is performed (a high-energy cheer perhaps with flags):

Hey stupid fucker,
You awful privileged nasty little fucker.
How can you balance budgets
When you have no sense of need?
You're spending money on immoral deeds.

Hey stupid fucker,
You sheltered rich-boy hypocrite, you fucker.
How do you sleep at night?
You have no sacrifice!
Your fucking children won't be sent to fight.

Hey stupid fucker,
You unapologetic little fucker.
Your propagandic lies
Won't save your fucking hide.
Half the nation wants your ass impeached.

GG: How many WMDs were finally found?
ALL: None!
GG: Any link between al Qaeda and Saddam?
ALL: No!

Hey stupid fucker,
It's not a game of chicken stupid fucker.
The world is not your playground;
Those jets are not your toys.
It's not your job to play god stupid fucker.

You're not god stupid fucker.

Curtain

3/19/03: two years later, how much wiser?

© 2005 Genevra Gallo

The second time the play is called, Genevra and Steve sit on stage together, on the floor, with a candle between them.

SM: How many wounded?

GG: (most recent stat) U.S., (most recent stat) other since the start of the war.

SM: You know he estimated we'd spend \$50 to \$60 billion.

GG: And with the latest congressional approval on _____, we're currently spending about \$300 billion.

SM: How many are dead?

GG: The estimates for Iraqi civilians are 17,000 to 19,000 – but I've heard figures as high as 25,000. It's hard to say because the U.S. military won't track it.

SM: How many Americans?

GG: As of tonight, (accurate figure). That's ___ since yesterday.

SM: Shit. That's more than a person per day.

GG: The fact that he's running this country into the ground to pay for a war that half the country does not support is bad enough. But the human cost... I just don't understand how they justify it.

(small pause)

GG: Do you pray Steve?

SM: (answers honestly)

GG: I never used to pray, but ever since I did that play where I gathered the names of the friends and family members of audience members who were fighting, I've prayed for them almost every day.

SM: How many more people here tonight know someone over there?

(they look at the hands in the darkness)

SM: You want to say a prayer?

GG: I don't know if it helps, but I don't want them to be alone. You know? I keep hoping that, in some way, on some level, they know they're not forgotten.

She closes her eyes, says a quick prayer and blows out the candle.

Curtain

R KIV

Another Casualty of War

© 2005 Jonathan Mastro

RW enters with a cigarette, tucked into his ear. He lights it, takes a drag, and exhales, satisfied.

RW: I like to smoke on stage. It makes me feel like myself. But I'm smoking in this play because a bunch of American soldiers were ordered to burn prisoners of war with cigarettes. They put lit cigarettes in the ears of handcuffed men. That's why I'm smoking right now. I didn't write this play. But I want you to remember why I'm smoking.

(Another drag.)

CURTAIN

Having a Ball

© 2005 Jonathan Mastro

Fancy ballroom music, JT and DC dance onstage while following is delivered over VO.
They dance throughout, oblivious to all but the music.

VO: A forty million dollar extravaganza! 250 thousand dollars will get you the good seats at the Inaugural Ball! Don't worry about your wallet: security will be tight! The days of Andrew Jackson free-for-alls are over!

(BD and JM face off with guns at the lip. They exit.)

VO: Speaking of former presidents, Mr Clinton and the other President Bush would just love for you to give some of your extra money to those poor poor drowning Asians. *Thanks*

(NK enters, lifts up her shirt to reveal her pregnant belly. She shrugs, and exits.)

VO: But first thing's first, folks, the sitting President (and I mean that in every sense of the word), needs your contributions. After all, the motto of our Ball is "Celebrating Service and Freedom!"

(JM enters, addressing the President as a little boy would, looking up to the heavens.)

JM: Mr. President? If God killed over 100,000 potential terrorists in Sri Lanka and Indonesia for us, does that mean we can get out of Iraq sooner?

(JT and DC stop dancing and join the rest of the Ensemble in kicking JM to death.)

CURTAIN

Rehearsal

Hearts and Minds: Yours and Mine

© 2005 Jonathan Mastro

JM: Many of our audience participation plays put the audience on the spot, which might make some people feel uncomfortable. In this play, you won't have to come up on stage. We can just meet halfway in the aisle closest to your seat. No pressure, it can only be 2 minutes long... does anyone here want to talk to me about why they support Bush?

He goes into the audience and gets 2 minutes to try to figure out exactly why that person would support Bush. Probing questions, we hope. Two goals: really understanding what's going on, and to try to convince them otherwise. The timer should call the

CURTAIN

detonator

© 2005 Bilal Dardai

BILAL stands behind a table with three sealed cans of Coke and a long strip of duct tape. DINAH and JONATHAN off to either side, speaking, as a sort of echo that occasionally goes first. As he speaks, BD shakes up the cans, one by one.

BD: What...

DC/JM: What disturbs...

BD: ...what disturbs me the most...

DC/JM: ...the most...

BD: ...besides all the...

DC/JM/BD: ...murder...

DC/JM: ...all the murder...

BD: ...is the way...

DC/JM: ...is the way that he...

BD: ...that I look in the...

DC/JM/BD: ...mirror...

BD: ...and the way...

DC/JM: ...and the way...

BD...that I sit on the train...

DC/JM: ...on the train...

BD: ...looking for people who look just like me...

DC/JM: ...and worrying...

BD: ...that I will hear words so familiar before there is...

DC: ...fear...

BD: ...there is...

JM: ...fire...

BD: ...there is fury...

DC/JM: ...over...

DC/JM/BD: ...London...

DC: ...and Baghdad...

JM: ...and Bali...

BD: ...and Jerusalem...

BD has affixed the shaken soda cans to the duct tape. He wraps the tape around his waist and steps toward the audience. As he affixes this belt, JM and DC continue.

DC/JM: ...and Madrid, and Kabul, and Mosul, and New York...

BD: ...and how...

DC/JM: ...and how when...

BD: ...when I stand in a crowd, I look out more closely

DC/JM: ...more closely...

BD: ...look out for myself.

BD prepares to open the cans. Before he does...

CURTAIN

2: They are ghosts of their former selves.

3: Mutated
And
Broken.

1: They're here with us.
But most have trouble sleeping.

(keep dropping pages until you run out, then leave the stage)

Does any of this belong to you?

CURTAIN

RWCHW

A Dunk in the Water

Ryan Walters November 7, 2006

(As Ryan describes the action it is done to him. Tone should be conversational)

RW: Water boarding is an interrogation technique that induces the feeling of drowning. A prisoner is tied to a board and their feet are raised up a little higher than their head. Cellophane is then wrapped around their head.

I: How tight?

RW: I don't know. If it induces the feeling of drowning it must be pretty tight.

I: Do you think it goes around the board too? So that their head is held in place, or do you think it is just around their head?

RW: I would think they would do whatever made it feel the scariest.

I: I think it would be scariest if they couldn't move their head out of the way of the water.

RW: Me too. Then water is poured over their head.

I: How much water?

RW: I don't know. A lot?

I: Do you want to try this?

RW: Yeah. I mean I know it's not the same. We've got a lot of control over this. .

I: Right. How long can you hold your breath?

RW: Let's say 15 seconds just so we don't do this for too long.

I: Okay. Ready.

RW: Ready.

(Someone wraps cellophane around his head and water is poured over him. A plastic container should be below his head to catch the water. Maybe this is done for 5 to 7 seconds. Then Ryan is removed from the device as they talk and pick up the stuff.)

I: What was it like? *What made you stop?*

RW: Answers. Is the image disturbing, or is just kind of huh?

I: Answers.

What I Didn't

RW: It must be horrible to have someone do that to you. It must be horrible to do that to someone.

I: It seems like a little more than just a dunk in the water.

RW: Yeah, it does.

CURTAIN

Accuse

Babushka ~~toing and Dang~~

Sharon Greene ©2006

SG and BD are in opposite corners of the theater, yelling. Both are slowly putting on layer after layer of traditional cultural headdress. Sharon has a pile of scarves and bandanas and is making the tallest Babushka ever seen.

SG: Bilal, you're Pakistani.

BD: My family is.

SG: Where are you hiding Osama Bin Laden!

BD: Maybe in my personalized cubby hole backstage at this theater.

You're Jewish, huh.

SG: Yup.

BD: How's your invasion of Lebanon going?

SG: I Pulled Out.

BD: What should I call that?

SG: Safe Sex. If I don't do it regularly, we're just going to end up with more little Middle Eastern Countries.

BD: Like a free Palestine.

SG: Yes. *They laugh.*

SG: Been to the mask lately?

BD: I think you mean Mosque.

SG: I'm Midwestern and we say mask.

BD: But.

SG: Don't criticize my regional dialect, it's cultural!

BD: I went the day before my wedding. They said some pretty appalling things about Jews. It was hard to tell if the people I came with were listening. Or cared. Or just agreed with them.

SG: Why don't you go back where you came from?

BD: ~~Naperville or Downers Grove? Or whatever combination of suburbs BD is from.~~

SG: Whatever, the people from those places all look the same to me.

They move towards center stage.

BD: You're a bigot Sharon.

SG: Probably. Lately I've been asked to speak for all Jews a lot more than usual. And justify Israeli foreign policy.

BD: Can you justify Israeli foreign policy?

SG: I don't try to. Like most Jewish Americans I'm appalled by the occupation and it's right wing perpetrators and hope to trade land for a lasting peace.

BD: And like many Americans who happen to be of Middle Eastern descent I hoped to one day exercise my right to fly around the world wearing platform shoes and carrying a large bottle of Gatorade.

SG: Complaining about anti-Semitism is one of those things that makes me feel Stereotypical. The whiney victim-hood always makes my skin crawl. But now that it's happening so often I have to admit... Israeli policy is making people hate Jews and people hating Jews is a serious problem for me.

BD: What if we put a stop to it all. Right here.

Lyle

Babushka P2. Archive

SG: What do you mean?

BD: If you can speak for all Jews and I can speak for Arab peoples Everywhere... Let's make peace!

Triumphant Music Plays. With the help of the other Neos...

BD: This Music is totally Westernized.

SG: So are we. They shrug.

Bilal and Sharon sit on opposite sides of a table. SG hold up a card that says, "Israel makes peace with all Arab nations", as if reading it in the light. She pans it to half the audience. Bilal does the same with a card that reads, "All Arab nations make peace with Israel". They switch signs, signing and panning both.

The play ends with an historic handshake. Possibly a Dove is release into the air. Ideally it would be immediately shot down, carved up and eaten. Never the less...

CURTAIN

ARCHIVE

Better YOU than ME

Ryan Walters

ALL: Right now.

Right now your phone is ringing.

Right now your iron is on.

And your car is being towed.

I'm sorry, but that is the least of your problems. Things get significantly worse from here out.

Right now. The scrape you got on your hand earlier tonight is starting to itch and you are afraid it might be infected. Don't scratch it.

Right now your home computer is being hacked and riddled with computer viruses.

ALL: Right now.

Right now the recording industry of America is breaking into your home and stealing all your music so that you will have to buy it all back. And by the time you get around to replacing it, owning music will be a breach of copyright, and you will have to rent it at approved listening centers.

Right now, Another C.E.O. has stolen your grandmother's retirement, and your retirement, and is having sex with prostitute in your bed.

All: Right now, but better you than me

Right now somewhere the cubs are losing.

And Dusty Baker is crying himself asleep....again

Right now a new scratch game has been introduced to fund public schools.

Scratch it off for the kids!

Unfortunately, by the time your kid's gets to school all schools will be in casinos and you will have gambled away your kid's college money. But hey, great buffets!

Right now, there are no longer 3 branches of government. Just one branch. And that branch has Dutch elm disease. And they are certain it was you who gave it them. And they are preparing a special cell with the words "torture encouraged" above it for you at Guantanamo.

Right now. All of this is happening to you.

I'm sorry, but not that sorry. Really, I am not sorry at all.

Better you than me.

All: Much better. Much better.

MIC ON SP

- Ryan lit w/ clip lights; some kind of 60B6
- Cast lights audience w/ clip lights

Playing With (a Totally Stupid Ass) Fire

© July 2006 Dina Connolly

Dina and Jacquelyn call each other on their cell phones.

- B1al*
DC: Hey, *Jacquelyn!*
BD JL: Hey Dina!
DC: I just thought I would call and say hi, and see how the show is going for ya.
JL: (*says how the show is going for her that evening, maybe includes a detail from a prior play*)
DC: (*responds with a detail of her experience from earlier in the show*) Hey, the reason why I was calling is because I wanted to check in with you in regards to how our little project is progressing.
JL: Project?
DC: You know, the bomb we're building.
JL: Oh, it's built. It's ready.
DC: When are we set to launch?
JL: Soon. It's going to change everything.
DC: I can't wait. Did you wire the money?
JL: No.
DC: Get a plane license?
JL: No.
DC: Scout a government building?
JL: No.
DC: Will we get around to any of that?
JL: Probably not.
DC: That's fine. What else can we say?
JL: Oh! Terrorists!
DC: Terrorists!
JL&DC: Terrorists! Terrorists! TERRORISTS!
JL: Oh! And we can say George Bush is a fucking asshole.
DC: That's old news.
JL: He looks like a chimp, and is a chump?
DC: That's pretty good.
JL: He's a monkey puppet.
DC: He sure is, Jacquelyn! He sure is!
(*They laugh very fakely, like cartoon villains*)
JL: So what kind of wireless service do you have?
DC: Verizon. You?
JL: (*answers*) How much do you think our phone records will be worth?
DC: Well, I figure if they are dumb enough to only listen to part of it, they'll freak out and it will be worth plenty, but otherwise, I doubt very much.
JL: That's fine by me.
DC: Well, have a great rest of the show!
JL: Thanks, you too! Bye!
DC: Bye!

At the end of the show Dina or Jacquelyn can present the audience with their "Bomb", which will consist of either a stuffed skunk toy, or a stink bomb from Uncle Fun.

Curtain

Archive

POLITICAL IT

©2006 mesquida

(Everyone stands with one shoe in)

1) Eeny, meeny, miny, moe

Mr. Bush has got to go,
If he hollers I don't care,
he cheats, he lies, there's no compare.

2) Eeny, meeny, miny, moe

rumsfeld's war continues to grow,
if he hollers I hope it's torture,
or maybe it's because the generals said he's an arrogant piece of shit and he should resign
immediately!

3) Eeny, meeny, miny, moe,

Condaleeza is a ho,
if she hollers I hope it's because she's getting fucked with a big donkey dick 'cause that's
what the administration is doing to all of us anyway. So... eeny meen miny mo.

4) Eeny, meeny, miny, moe,

catch a cheney heart attack,
holler for haliburton, they might save your ass,
'cause no one else is going to help you after you used 911 as an excuse to start a war, you
manipulating, lying old cunt. And my mother told me that liberals are born and
conservatives are created just like you have created an era of hatred between people who
probably agree more than disagree, you poor shot, media hating, secret leaker, doddering
old fool... And you are most certainly it..... dick.

(the last person standing says the curtain)

CURTAIN

National Anthem

© 2006 Bilal Dardai

BILAL faces the back wall at an angle, standing on a chair, holding a hat in front of his chest, and quietly singing the Pakistani national anthem into the wrong end of a megaphone, repeating as necessary. JONATHAN and KRISTIE stand on the lip and read their lines off of notecards.

JM: Bilal is an immigrant. He was born in Karachi, Pakistan, and flew over here with his mother when he was one month old.

KK: He has two prevailing memories of Karachi, a city he last saw in 1983. The first is riding a camel along the beach.

JM: The second is the Pakistani national anthem. They used to play it on Pakistani television every night when they signed off, and his mother used to sing it to him after they came back to Chicago. That's what he's singing right now.

Pause.

KK: Bilal doesn't know what any of the words mean. He was never told and he never bothered to look it up. As far as he's concerned they're a beautiful collection of syllables strung together over an uplifting melody.

Pause.

JM: Bilal's grandfather founded the first penicillin factory in Pakistan. In the field of medicine, his grandfather is legendary; a pioneer. A man spoken of with great reverence.

KK: His mother is related, by marriage, to Shaukat Aziz; the current Prime Minister of Pakistan.

JM: Bilal has no idea how he could exploit these connections to his advantage.

KK: Or if there is any advantage to having these connections at all.

JM: If he has the ability to ask for anything.

Pause.

JM: The Pentagon says that Osama bin Laden is hiding out in Pakistan.

KK: The citizens die in senseless riots over senseless Danish cartoons.

JM: High-ranking government officials sell nuclear secrets to the highest bidders and suffer few consequences for them.

KK: Women in rural parts of the country are still raped or murdered because of toxic strains of tribalism and twisted religious ideology.

JM: Members of his family still live there.

KK: And it fills him with a cold granite sadness inside.

Pause.

JM: Bilal is singing the national anthem of Pakistan.

KK: He doesn't know what it means.

BD stops singing and lowers the megaphone.

JM: But he doesn't owe you, or anybody else, any explanations as to where his allegiances lie.

CURTAIN

Tempest in a Teacup

© 2006 Bilal Dardai

BILAL sits on a chair mounted on a podium and casually steeps a teabag in an empty mug as he speaks this monologue.

BD: In the hallucination I expect to have in the seconds before I die, I receive a Lifetime Achievement Award for Cowardice. I get up from my seat in the auditorium, the orchestra plays thirty seconds of my dramatic personal score; and the surgically altered woman in the breathtaking evening gown hands me a statuette that looks just like this, right now, like a young man in a chair steeping a teabag in an empty cup.

Nobody in the room understands the image because smelting the context would have made the award top-heavy. So I deliver this acceptance speech, hastily scribbled on a cocktail napkin; I say Ladies and Gentlemen of the Academy. The man on this statuette is sits in a plush suburban living room with a dozen other men; while their wives, sisters, and daughters are in another part of the house having their own conversations. In the conservative culture of my parents' community, men and women do not sit together, because their interpretation of Islam demands that you do not trust human nature, that if given even the slightest opportunity all men and women will fall into sin. This is why the veil and the *burqa*, this is why the prohibition on dating. This is why the most extreme views strive to limit personal freedom, occasionally to the point of violence. Because the surest way to never burn yourself is to never buy matches.

At this point, in the auditorium of my final delusion, the crowd goes quiet and apprehensive. The man holding his strange award has just criticized Islam, and any second now the network affiliates will be flooded with calls from ordinary Muslims, Muslims who are angry, who ask *how dare this idiot* say such things, if I see him on the street I will kill him and spit on his corpse, praise be to Allah. I will do this violence in the name of Islam and make it sound ridiculous when others claim the word means "peace."

And then the terrified woman in the breathtaking evening gown tries to beckon me offstage but I won't stop talking, my voice drowns out the orchestra, I am saying I am *not* standing here and insulting *Islam*, I am not insulting the *ummah* or the *namaz*, I am speaking no ill of the Prophet *rus-Allah-ayla-allaysallum*. I am simply tired and frustrated with you, you of flesh and bone, you Muslim men and women hiding behind the cover of the *Q'uran* while you commit simple murder, and I am tired of you moderate Muslims who know better but refuse to speak out against the hatred festering in your own communities. I cannot believe that *God* needs your help to punish those He feels are deserving. And I believe that to act otherwise shows nothing but insecurity. To act otherwise shows a remarkable *lack of faith*.

Pause. He steeps his teabag.

In the parking lot on the way to the after party I am shot six times. And a religion that has survived Crusades, Inquisitions, and all manner of negative propaganda is safe from my dangerous ideas.

The irony of course being that the reason I received my imaginary award was because I was never brave enough to speak these words in the first place. Not in the plush suburban living room, not in the lobby outside of the mosque, not anywhere it really mattered. There's no risk as I say it now. I doubt that anybody here tonight is plotting my assassination.

Although I could be wrong. Perhaps tonight, or some other night, I'll leave this theater and not make it past Foster, because a few sentences I spoke while sitting in a chair inspired somebody to subjugate the tenets of their faith to their own mindless desires for bloodshed. And I'll have to admit that maybe my parents were right, and human nature is *not* to be trusted.

But as I die, I have a hallucination of watching somebody else accept the award instead.

CURTAIN

Time AND Date

~~Hopital~~ → ~~pen~~

Ryan Walters September 12, 2006

It is: (time) here in Chicago:

6:15

It is: (Time) in Washington D.C. + 1 hour 7:15

BAGDAD

It is: (time) in Iraq. ^{Kabul} Wed, 3:15 AM

UTC/GMT + 3

It is: (time) in Afghanistan Wed 3:45 AM

// " +4,30

It is 783 days to Nov. 2nd 2008

Curtain

Archive

**Title: Forthcoming
Ryan Walters March 14, 2006**

After 9/11 there was a lot of talk if the country could still laugh. If irony and cynicism was still funny.

Reads quote from Harpers:

"On December 18 of last year, Congressman John Conyers Jr. (D. Mich) introduced into the House of Representatives a resolution inviting it to form "a select committee to investigate the Administration's intent to go to war before congressional authorization, manipulation of pre-war intelligence, encouraging and countenancing torture, retaliating against critics, and to make recommendations regarding grounds for possible impeachment."

I never heard about that on the news. Nothing came of it

All that talk about if we could laugh after what someone else did to us.

Now with everything our government is doing I don't see how I should be laughing at anything. And when I do laugh. I laugh to forget. I laugh so I don't cry.

Curtain

Sex/Politics/Foursquare
© 2006 Jonathan Mastro (June)

Clock is stopped and audience is told that "Sex" is in the nametag room, "Politics" is in the tech closet, and Foursquare is on the stage. They have 30 seconds to get to the play they want to see.

Sex takes place in nametag room. Jacqueline stands, smoking a cigarette, looking languid, pulling at various parts of her clothing as if it's too hot to wear clothes. KK and JT are stationed outside each door into the nametag room. The 'downstage' door is opened when the 'go' is called. JT mans the 'upstage' door and the 'stage left' door, KK mans the 'stage right' door. When JT is SL, he wears a wig and speaks in a husky drag voice. The dialogue is 1 (SR), 2 (U/S), 3 (SL), and the doors are only opened for the speaker's lines, unless otherwise indicated. 1, 2, and 3's lines are spoken low and intense, Jacqueline's lines are syrupy, ironic, come-hither detached.

Jacqueline: I suppose you want to hear about my virginity.

1 (KK): Look at her in there. The little slut.

Jacqueline: I'm not going to tell you a thing.

1 slams door.

Jacqueline: It's awfully hot in here, don't you think?

2 (JT): Smoking is prohibited in the theatre.

1 (KK): That's what I told her.

2: Will you adhere to our regulations or not?

1: She won't. Of course she won't.

2 slams door (and JT puts on a wig and quickly runs around to door 3). 1 stares at Jacqueline for a moment.

1: You little bitch.

1 slams door.

Jacqueline: Look at my mouth. It's slightly open.

Jacqueline opens her mouth slightly.

3 (JTdrag): This behaviour is scandalous!

1: That's what I tried to say.

3: Who does she think she is?

1: Corrupting our children.

1 and 3 shut doors.

Jacqueline: Wait right here.

Jacqueline closes the 'downstage' door. When the door is opened again, KK and JTdrag are in the nametag room kissing. Jacqueline is nowhere to be found. KK and JTdrag notice the audience, then close the door. At the end of this play, CURTAIN is called.

Polities is BD in the tech closet, standing on a milk crate with a black hood over his head and his arms outstretched, Abu Ghraib style.

JM has an army helmet and a watergun, which he points at the audience.

JM: I know I'm supposed to support our troops, even if I hate this fucking war. But I don't know what that means anymore. I think I care more about those little kids that our troops shot in the face than I care about our troops. Does the President actually believe 'sensitivity training' is going to suddenly make war NOT about shooting kids in the face? Because no matter how much you convince yourselves otherwise, war is about shooting kids in the face, and it always will be. So, using that as a guide, maybe I don't support our troops, because I can't.

JM then shoots BD with the watergun until Curtain is called.

Foursquare happens on the stage. HR and RW play with 2 audience members; replacing whoever is knocked out as needed.

Who's On Fire?

© 2006 Bilal Dardai

BILAL and STEVE shuffle onstage in fedoras, stopping center, facing away from each other in a three-quarter turn. Their delivery is very stage-y; like an old vaudeville routine.

BD: Hey Steve!

SM: Hey Bilal!

BD: I got a riddle for ya!

SM: All right Bilal, let's hear your riddle!

BD: What do you call it when you have a country being gradually destroyed by violence occurring between two or more native opposition forces vying for cultural and political control over a war-torn society?

SM: I don't know, Bilal, what *do* you call it when you have a country being gradually destroyed by violence occurring between two or more native opposition forces vying for cultural and political control over a war-torn society?

BD: I don't know, either, Steve! I'd call it a **civil war**, but the latest Pentagon report insists that it's not how you'd currently describe the situation in Iraq! Nossir, despite the sectarian death squads and the religious extremist militias and the 25 attacks per day, that's not a civil war at all! So don't you go calling it that!

SM: Don't worry! I won't!

BD: Oh, you better not!

SM: I won't!

BD: Because I'm watching you!

SM: Okay!

BD: Hey Steve!

SM: Hey Bilal!

BD: What do you call a group of people so callous and afraid of losing power in one country that they've monumentally fucked up that they can't even acknowledge what's already happening in another country they've monumentally fucked up?

SM: I don't know, Bilal, what *do* you call a group of people so callous and afraid of losing power in one country that they've monumentally fucked up that they can't even acknowledge what's already happening in another country they've monumentally fucked up?

BD: That wasn't a riddle, Steve!

SM: It wasn't?

BD: No! I've got a few choice names for those people, I was just curious what you'd call them!

Pause. They look at each other, and then shuffle offstage opposite in the manner they entered.

CURTAIN

ARCHIVE

Stand-Up Tragedy
© 2006 Jonathan Mastro (July)

JM stands with mic in spotlight.

JM: Have you ever noticed how everybody's got these yellow ribbon magnets on their cars these days? They're like *everywhere*. I decided to read one. You know what they say? Has anyone ever read one?

(JM gets Audience Response.)

JM: "Support our Troops." I wondered to myself: maybe I should get one of those. Cause if I don't maybe someone will think I *don't* Support Our Troops. And then they'll key up my car or something. So I was thinking, maybe I should buy one. But then I saw this newspaper headline and I was like: *shit*. I park in Andersonville a lot, and people are really *sensitive* about *rape* here. And if they see this yellow ribbon magnet they might think I support those *rapist* troops. Which of course I don't. I mean, I don't want to offend anybody. I'm sure they're really nice guys and it's all a big misunderstanding. But still, buying that yellow ribbon magnet might be misinterpreted by someone and my car might get keyed up by a lesbian or a rape victim or something, and that's like a lose-lose situation for me, you know. But then I get this idea: what if I got a magnet big enough to write on the other side of the ribbon so it's like "Support our troops... but not the ones who rape fourteen-year old girls and kill their six-year-old sisters and their parents." But here's the problem: the Marines keep on *doing* shit like that, which is a lot of stuff to write on a magnet, and even if I got a big enough one, I have this little Japanese car, which is of course a problem already. So then it came to me: why don't I *pretend* there isn't even a *war* going on? It works for everyone else, right? I mean, when was the last time you had a conversation that was like: "Did you see the war last night? It was amazing! They were raping the shit out of some 14-year old girls and then they fucking killed their families!" I could be like, "What war? Sorry, man, I don't really watch TV." Which is true. Except for 'Entourage.'

CURTAIN

The Complex Nature of the Problem OR Why I Hate It When People Pray For
Peace In The Middle East
Sharon Greene ©2008

Sharon and Bilal open beers together and drink.

SG: For me it's like telling someone I just got my period and having them hand me a band aid.

BD: Because It shows their ignorance of the complex nature of the problem.

SG: An ignorance they maintain because it's messy and they don't want to think about it.

BD: I'd like to stop thinking about it now.

SG: Me too, but I'm Jewish so it's with me all the time.

BD: And I'm married so it's with me a few days a month.

SG: What if we agreed to hate each other but stop killing each other.

BD: Of course, we'd think of that. Because we don't hate each other at all. We're fully assimilated Americans who drink beer together on the Sabbath.

They clink.

SG: I can't wait for the Palestinians to get their own country.

BD: Really.

SG: Yeah. I can't think of something more terrible and humbling to happen to a people then to become responsible for their own condition.

BD: So, for you, their country-hood would be a kind of revenge.

SG: Uh huh. It isn't pretty but it's how I feel and I decided to say it out loud.

BD: Well it's hard to hear and it certainly doesn't sound like peace.

SG: No, I don't think peace is going to be the outcome.

BD: I think the problem is that the history goes so deep and both peoples are so committed to remembering past battles. Remember when I told you the story of Ishmael.

SG: And I had never even heard the story of Abraham's son Ishmael.

BD: And I feel that this is the seed of the separation, something all Muslims learn.

SG: And my ignorance of it keeps me unable to understand the grievances of the very people I hope to live with. It seems that forgiveness is unlikely.

BD: Maybe the only hope would be a great forgetting.

SG: Though we know we have lost something in assimilation.

BD: I know what makes my mother sad.

SG: I know what makes my Rabbi shake his head and frown.

BD: What's this play about?

SG: Praying for beer in the middle east.

BD: To beer.

SG: Beer.

They Clink.

CURTAIN

ARCTIC
© 11/17/09
LW

Us vs. Them

1, 2, and 3 are standing next to each other facing out.

1 and 2 are holding hands.

1. They're gonna take one of the 9-11 guys up from Guantanamo to stand trial in New York.

2. I heard.

1. It's weird that they didn't just kill him.

2. What do you mean?

3. What do you mean 'they'?

1. I mean, over there we've killed a ton of people who were totally innocent. But there's this guy, and he's probably guilty of something. But we have to prove it, and then we can kill him?

1 & 2 stop holding hands.

3. What do you mean 'we'?

1. Like the Native Americans. We just killed them.

3. What do you mean 'we'?

2 & 3 hold hands.

2. In the 70s the US government sterilized a quarter of all Native American women.

1. What?

3. In the 1970s the US government sterilized a quarter of all Native American women

1. Is that true?

All hold hands

3. We probably tortured him.

1. Who?

2. The 9-11 guy.

3. We shouldn't have done that.

1 lets go of 2's hand.

2 lets go of 3's hand.

1. I didn't do anything.

~~All hold hands~~ 2 & 3 half hands look at 1.

1 looks at them.

United States Military Rules for
The World's Oldest War Game

© 2009 Bilal Dardai

A Neo sits behind a chess game in-progress. They illustrate their lines as they speak them.

Remove your queen from the board.

If a pawn reaches its opponent's last row, it becomes a queen.

Remove that queen from the board.

Good luck.

They exit, taking the queen with them.

CURTAIN

Trajectory

@ 2009 Bilal Dardai

CARINA, JAY, and JESSICA sit around a table. MELI and MEGAN stand near them with music stands. They each have a small supply of finger rockets.

RPT: Scenario. I offer to give Caitlin a missile under the condition that she may only aim it at Jay. Caitlin accepts.

MELI gives CS a finger rocket. She aims it at JP.

MM: Scenario. I offer to give Jay a missile under the condition that he may only aim it at Caitlin. Jay accepts.

JAY gives JP a finger rocket. He aims it at CS.

RPT: I offer to give Megan one missile under the condition that it may not be given to Jay.

MM: I accept.

MELI gives MM one missile.

MM: I offer to give Jessica a missile under the condition that it may not be aimed at Jay. Jessica accepts.

JESSICA gives JP a missile. She aims it at CS.

RPT: I offer to give Caitlin one missile under the condition that she gives it to Jessica. Caitlin accepts.

MELI gives CS a missile.

MM: Caitlin offers to give one missile to Jessica under the condition that she aims it at Jay.

RPT: Jessica accepts.

CS gives JP one missile. She aims it at JP.

RPT: Megan offers Caitlin one missile under the condition that she aims it at Jessica.

MM: Caitlin accepts.

MELI gives CS one missile. She aims it at JP.

MM: I offer Jessica two missiles under the condition that she gives one to Jay.

JW: I accept.

JW gives JA two missiles.

JW: I offer Jay one missile under the condition that he aims it at Bilal.

RD: Hey!

JT: I accept.

JW gives JT a missile. He aims it at RD.

MM: I offer Bilal two missiles under the condition that he gives one to Jessica.

RD: I accept.

JW gives RD two missiles.

RD: I offer Jessica one missile under the condition that she aims it at Megan.

MM: Hey!

JW: I accept.

RD gives JW a missile. She aims it at MM.

JT: I offer Megan one missile under the condition she aims it at Caitlin.

MM: I accept.

RD: I offer Caitlin one missile under the condition that she aims it at Megan.

CS: I accept.

JT gives MM a missile and RD gives CS a missile. JOHN enters.

CG: I offer John one missile under the condition that he aims it at Bilal.

MM/RD: Hey!

JW: I accept.

CS gives JP one missile. He aims it at BD. CS aims her missile at MM. Pause.

BD: I suggest to Caitlin that it makes more sense to aim her missiles at Jay.

MM: I suggest to Jessica that it makes more sense to aim her missiles at Caitlin.

JP: I suggest to everybody that it makes the most sense to aim our missiles at Bilal and Megan.

JP, JA, PT, and CS aim their missiles at MM and MM.

BD: I suggest to Megan that maybe it wasn't a good idea to start this in the first place.

MM: (aims a missile at BD) Oh, ya think?

Blast.

CURTAIN

7 WTC

actvive Q 2010
fr wif

Two Neos (male) are standing upstage-center, facing upstage. They are 1 WTC and 2 WTC, stage-right and left respectively. Another, 7 WTC, is directly stage-right.

VO: 8:46 am, eastern daylight time.

1 WTC smacks the left side of his neck with his hand, as if bit by a mosquito.

1 WTC: Fuck.

VO: 9:03 am.

2 WTC grabs his right side, at shoulder or just below.

2 WTC: Aww. Fuck.

VO: 9:17 am. The FAA shuts down all New York area airports.

VO: 9:26 am. The FAA bans takeoffs of all civilian flights.

VO: 9:37 am.

Crashing sound in green room.

VO: 9:45 am. US airspace is shut down. All civilian flights are ordered to land at the nearest airport. All international flights are redirected to Canada.

VO: 9:59 am.

2 WTC collapses to the ground, and the following is said while falling.

2 WTC: Oh fuck. O god. O god. Oh fuck.

VO: 10:03 am.

Crashing sound in nametag room.

VO: 10:28 am.

1 WTC collapses to the ground.

1 WTC: Oh fuck. O god. O god. Oh fuck.

VO: 12:15 pm. US airspace is cleared of all commercial and private flights.

Beat. Beat.

7 WTC looks around above him.

VO: 5:20 pm.

7 WTC: What the fuck? I didn't even get hit by anything.

7 WTC collapses.

VO: 5:20 pm. 7 World Trade Center, a 47 story building, collapses. It had been fully evacuated, and no one is killed.

Beat.

CURTAIN.

About a buck-seven

© 2011 Bilal Dardai

BILAL stands onstage, towards the lip, with a hat on his head. At the top of the play, he takes the hat off of his head and removes a pair of Iraqi currency notes from it. He puts the hat in front of him and the notes in each hand. He speaks to the audience.

BD: I found these being used as bookmarks in a small book of daily meditations, which belongs to somebody who isn't speaking to me now. Together, they total 1,250 Iraqi dinars, which comes to about a buck-seven, American. (*EEVIN has walked on and stopped near BD. BD does a short stomp-dance. She tosses a quarter into the hat and stands next to him.*) But forget the conversion rate for a second and just look at these. They're beautifully crafted, these little mass-produced works of art with intricate drawings of ancient architecture and colors like the feathers of little-seen songbirds. (*PHIL has walked on and stopped near BD and EH. BD and EH do the short stomp-dance. PR tosses a quarter into the hat and stands next to them.*) Iraqi money has only looked like this for a little over five years. The old currency was just as colorful and well-designed but each piece of it also included a portrait of our 80s ally, 90s nuisance, and 2000s trophy Saddam Hussein. Before the invasion, one could do pretty well for themselves making art out of his image. You remember the statue. (*MEGAN has walked on and stopped near the group. They all do the short stomp-dance. MM tosses a quarter into the hat and stands next to them.*) You know how much a Saddam Hussein banknote is worth today? It's not. Like any other artwork, its only worth in money is what somebody's willing to pay for it. (*GREG has walked on and stopped near the group. They all do the short stomp-dance. GA tosses a quarter into the hat and stands next to them.*) The proposed Republican Congressional budget, as it often does, intends to cut the National Endowment for the Arts budget, already a paltry sum, down to zero. This is meant to be a serious gesture of fiscal responsibility just a few months after a fiery tantrum to secure tax breaks for the most wealthy of Americans. (*JILL has walked on and stopped near the group. They all do the short stomp-dance. JB tosses a nickel and two pennies into the hat and stands next to them.*) I'm not going to argue that what I personally make here on this stage is inherently vital to society and worthy of federal subsidy. (*The group, except for BD, begins to perform the dance repeatedly throughout the rest of the play.*) I am going to take offense to the idea that the pursuit of art is somehow more frivolous and unnecessary than the activities of the country's most well-dressed gambling addicts and grifters. I am going to take offense that I have to justify my existence, my contributions, so I can beg for the tiniest fraction of the money that goes to produce better instruments of massive carnage. I am going to be offended that I live in a country that ever values its commerce over its culture, and you know why? (*They stomp one last time and hold. BD holds up the Iraqi currency.*) Because every time a society changes, or revolves, or dies, the art remains art. But the money does not remain money.

CURTAIN

Archive

Jelly Belly Martyr Bean

TIM Ried. 5/11

Ryan, Chloe and a third are on chairs at a table center-stage.
Isolating lights and from the

Ryan takes a jelly bean, eats it and tries to describe the taste,
guessing the flavor.

Chloe takes another jelly bean, and like Ryan, eats it and tries to
describe the taste and guess the flavor.

The third takes a blood capsule from the bowl or bag of jelly beans
and puts it in his or her mouth. He or she will continue to take
blood capsules as if casually eating them through the next chunk of
text. Chloe and Ryan will also continue to eat jelly beans.

The following obeys a kind of rhythm.

K: Blood.

R: Osama Bean Laden.

K: Blood.

C: Concrete.

R: Champagne.

K: Blood.

C: Burnt flesh.

K: Blood.

R: Afghanistan.

K: Blood.

C: Geronimo.

K: Blood.

R: London.

C: Mumbai.

K: Blood... Blood...

Setting the jelly beans down on the table.

K: So what's next?

C: Now we're at war.

K: Will we win?

C: Probably not?

K: Why?

R: There is no way for it to end.

The third then scrapes and rubs their tongue, spits and tries to get
the taste out of their mouth. After a moment observing this, Ryan
and Chloe begin again casually eating the jelly beans.

CURTAIN

Archive

NEO TSA: Profiling

Neo walks on stage with flashlight searching with suspicion. Looks at
hold this microwave on your crotch or let someone feel you up. Make microwave
popcorn in the microwave.
someone is name tagged red flag, potential terrorist, profiling
Did you purchase a ticket tonight? Can I see it? Do you have any form of ID on you
tonight? Can I see it? We're going to have to search you.
You have two choices: low dosage of possible radiation in your sensitive areas. OR
a 30 second groping of your sensitive areas.

Female Search or Male search.

Entire cast gropes the crotch of person. And screams "Clean"

Up up and away in my beautiful balloon plays.

CURTAIN

Relative Dimensions

© 2011 Bilal Dardai

1 and 2 stand with two pieces of poster board. 1's is cut in the shape of South Dakota, 2's in the shape of Afghanistan. As they start speaking, they move very, very slowly away from each other.

1: South Dakota...

2: ...and Afghanistan...

1: ...are 7000 miles apart.

2: Approximately.

Beat. They continue moving.

1: South Dakota's total area is approximately 77,000 square miles.

2: Afghanistan's total area is approximately 252,000 square miles.

Beat. They continue moving.

1: South Dakota is made of plains. Its highest elevation is approximately 7200 square feet.

2: Afghanistan is made of mountains. Its highest elevation is approximately 25,000 square feet.

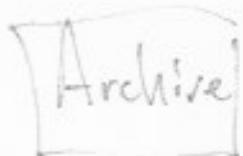
Beat. They stop.

2: Parts of Afghanistan are ruled by conservative religious zealots who punish infractions of their strict moral code with grievous injury or death.

1: The South Dakota legislature is currently debating a bill that could classify the murder of an abortion provider as "justifiable homicide."

Beat. They start moving closer together. After a few moments...

CURTAIN



We support our Marvins

Jay Torrence © 2011

I recently got this email from a guy who saw the show a few years ago:

KKV: (reading from a clipboard)

Dear Jay:

I was reminiscing of a Too Much Light show I went to about 4 years ago when you were telling (through a box fan) a story of a guy getting his head shit on by a bird.

I am a deployed U.S. Marine. We are deployed on a ship in the middle east. Life sucks. The food is awful, the moral sucks, and we are just trying to get by. One of my junior Marines (Lance Corporal Marvin Dominguez) has yet to receive any mail (care packages or otherwise). His family can not afford it. I am writing in hopes that you and your gang of creative masterminds can create a package for him. I know this would raise the moral level of this lonely Marine. This is 100% charity and would be appreciated to the max.

Respectfully sent,

Sargeant Justin Piacenza

13th Marine Expeditionary Unit (USS BOXER)

JT: So I've never done anything to directly support our troops. I have conflicted feelings toward our involvement in the middle east and war in general. But I'm making a care package for Marvin to show my support to a fellow American and Marine who is far away from home. Is there anyone here tonight who might be willing to help me?

JT tries to get a volunteer brought onto stage as a Marvin writing desk is brought into place stage left on the lip.

JT: What I'd like for you to do, is sit here through the next few plays and write Marvin a letter of encouragement. I'd like to take a picture of you that we'll include with your letter. And in return you can take home this "We Support our Marvin" T-shirt.

Other cast members takes over audience member handling and explaining.

JT: Here's what I don't know about marvin:

RW: (reading from a clipboard)

If he likes to hold a gun.

KC: (reading) If he feels our involvement in the middle east is justified.

RW: If he's ever had to kill anyone.

JT: Here's what I do know about Marvin:

RW: (reading from clipboard) Marvin is 20 years old.

KC: He's a Big New Orleans Saints Fan...

RW: Hes from Ponchatoula, Louisiana

KC: He wears a Large shirt

RW: 5'10, Dark Blonde Hair – Blue Eyes

KC: Marvin joined the Marine Corps because he was in ROTC (family tradition).

RW: He owns a Mutt Chihuahua who is super fat...and he is SUPER proud of her.

KC: Favorite Artists – Red Hot Chili Peppers, Seether, Foo Fighters

RW: Favorite Comedian – George Carlin

KC: Favorite food – Jambalaya (haha, he wouldn't budge to anything else)

RW: Favorite Book – Three Musketeers

KC: Favorite Snack Food – Pretzels

RW: General care package items: word puzzles, Non-melting candy and gum, Powdered Drink Mixes, small board games, Nerf balls, air fresheners, any kind of fun little game things to play with, pirate stuff (we are deployed on a ship in the Mid. East)

KC: He's a keep to yourself type of kid. Very soft spoken, polite. Dedicated to staying in shape. VERY FOCUSED on any mission he is put on.

We have this list of things about Marvin taped to the desk for reference.

JT: Throughout the rest of the evening if the "We support our Marvin" writing seat is empty, Anyone should feel free to come down (just be sure to move back and forth during the in betweens of our plays). And write Marvin a letter of encouragement. We will take your picture and send them both to him.

Thanks!

CURTAIN

Archive

America's Military, and My Soldier
Written by Kurt Chiang Feb 28 2012

You know that thing they say about weighing the type of person they want as their President? They say this: "Could I sit down and have a beer with the guy?" And if they decide that ultimately, yes, they can sit down and have a beer with the guy, then he can be their President.

As an avid beer drinker, I completely understand this reasoning. Here's another question I ask myself about my President. "Am I as smart, or smarter, than the guy?" I asked this question of George W Bush, and ultimately decided, "Yes, I am just as smart if not smarter than the guy, so no, he should *not* be my President." And it turns out, I was right. He had no fucking business being in there.

Allow me to continue talking about intelligence.

Our current President Barack Obama apologized recently on behalf of America and a few half-witted soldiers for burning Korans in plain view of the Afghani people. President Obama was correct in apologizing for this stupid, stupid act. His immediate apology was a really smart thing to do, despite what some really dumb people say.

But I want to talk more about the stupid, stupid soldiers.

As a skinny Chicago performance artist who grew up in a major Metropolitan area, I have a lot of presumptions of people in the military. One of those is that they are a bunch of undereducated, gun-worshipping, bucktoothed lemmings that couldn't think for themselves if their life depended on it. So, no, it doesn't surprise me that a few idiot soldiers were dumb enough to set fire to a few hundred copies of the Holy Koran, in a public place, in broad daylight, in the middle of Afghanistan. That was a stupid thing to do.

Similarly, as a skinny Chicago performance artist, I might be stupid enough to burn this Holy Bible on stage in protest. Hence, why I am not President.

One of the reasons I don't want to burn this in front of you, is because I'm afraid one of you might be a soldier or other military official who might take offense, and kill me on the spot using one of the one hundred different ways you know how to snap my neck. By the way, that's impressive. You're saying to yourself, "Fuck this guy, I read. I'm not stupid." And I would say to you, "Yes, I believe you," because you are at this show tonight. Welcome, I am thrilled that you're here.

So I'd like to meet you. If you are this person that I just described, please, come up onstage, have a beer with me. I'd like to put aside politics for the time being, just chat talk briefly about books. I'm looking for something to read.

CURTAIN.

Extremely Quiet And Incredibly Far.
Trevor Dawkins
2012

Archide

As Trevor is speaking he is setting up a block up on the lip. He puts two small identical towers on the block.

Since I got into this theater company I half promised myself I would never write a play about 9/11. This was mostly because I felt there was no new insight I could offer, and that my own personal experience of the tragedy wasn't very significant in comparison to others.

There is a level of pride that borders on elitism for people who live in New York City. I grew up ten minutes outside the Bronx and thirty minutes from the heart of Manhattan but I was usually treated as tourist when New Yorkers found out I was from the suburbs.

It might have been petty, but it was definitely frustrating having some know it all who grew up in Iowa that happened to get accepted into NYU talk to me like I had never walked a city block before.

New York was very much a part of my upbringing. When I was too young to understand or appreciate any of it my mom would drive me into Greenwich Village where the buildings were still covered in pre-gentrified graffiti and she would sit me down in front of some neo expressionist artwork in a loft gallery in the hopes that the paintings deeper meanings might seep into my pores.

When I was a little bit older my father would surprise me with Tickets to Knicks games at the garden. I liked always liked watching John Starks the most because he was the team's sixth man work horse which is the title I gave myself when I play on my towns CYO basketball team.

Older still and I would sneak away from the suburbs on the metro north and drink at Bars like The Hat and Chef T's because they never carded and would later go to the midtown high rises where I had no business being and I would try and make out with the rich private school girls who were friends of friends.

I took pride in learning to navigate the subway on my own and knowing what days you could go to the museums for free.

There is a lookout at my town library that has a view of downtown Manhattan. Across the river are the palisades where John Rockefeller the billionaire bought out all the millionaires so they couldn't build mansions on top of the cliffs edge and ruin the view. There is a flag over the library that's wires clang loudly in the wind in the wind and toxic water from the Hudson River was folds over and round the rocks below.

That's where I was standing.

An ensemble member comes on, removes one of the Towers and pours baby powder out of their hand where the tower was standing.

Curtain

ARCHIVE

journalism

© 2013 Bilal Dardai

BILAL and JOE stand next to each other onstage. JD punches BD in the shoulder.

BD: Assault.

BD punches JD in the shoulder.

JD: Terrorism.

Pause.

CURTAIN

If The Drones are Dreaming, or Sgt. Predator's Blown Apart Club Band

© 2013 Bilal Dardai

Music¹ and movement piece. Darkness at the top, to an isolated spot on a paper airplane at center. Lights slowly expand to a wash with colors, shifting like a lava lamp throughout.

Three Neos with umbrellas slowly sunrise behind the airplane. Each has a targeting reticule on it. Two other Neos enter floating colorful paper airplanes in their hands.

Part I

The umbrellas begin spinning behind the airplane. Airplane Neos begin performing a dance, umbrella Neos join in with their own movements. Umbrella Neos leave behind umbrellas and rush offstage.

Part II

Airplane Neos continue dancing, two umbrella Neos return with four large placards that read EXTRA, JUDICIAL, TARGETED, and KILLING. Third umbrella Neo returns with bin of building blocks. Airplane Neos float by the placards—JUDICIAL is flipped around to read JOYFUL and KILLING is flipped to read CARING. Placard Neos flare their signs and then drop them.

Part III

Airplane Neos and two umbrella Neos throw their airplanes onto the stage; ribbons trail out of their tails. Neo behind the main airplane throws blocks up into the air joyously. After a few moments of this, all Neos venerate the center plane, and then lie or sit on the floor as if dead amidst the chaos. Lights fade out as music continues.

CURTAIN

(Dance on following page.)

¹ Kula Shaker, "Shower Your Love"

Gender Warriors in Support of Chelsea Manning

by Malic White, August 2013

MW: If you support Chelsea Manning in her release of restricted government documents, could you please come on stage?

MW instructs audience members to assume a plank position. MW and Neos 1 and 2 assume the plank position across the stage. Neos 3 and 4 stand on either side. Neo 3 starts a stopwatch.

3: The plank is an isometric core strength exercise that involves maintaining a difficult position for extended periods of time. If you practice--

1, 2, MW: It's not that hard.

4: Chelsea Manning was sentenced to 35 years in a military prison after releasing the largest set of restricted documents ever leaked to the public.

3: The current world record for the plank position is 3 hours, 7 minutes and 15 seconds. The record was set by George Hood, who is a former Marine. People call him a hero.

4: People call Chelsea Manning a traitor.

3: People call Chelsea Manning "Bradley" and "he," even after she released a statement specifically asking to be called "Chelsea" and "she."

1, 2, MW: It's not that hard.

MW: Two minutes is not enough time to address the bigger issues. We could talk about government secrecy or how the U.S. prison system is basically government-funded housing for the disenfranchised or how the Department of Defense lists being transgender as a "unallowable medical condition."

4: But let's start with something basic.

3: Let's start with the name Chelsea.

4: Let's start with the pronoun "she."

3: Let's practice: Chelsea. She.

1, 2, MW: Chelsea. She.

4: The plank provides a base for all forms of exercise.

3: Referring to a transgender person by their preferred name and pronoun is the most basic sign of respect.

1, 2, MW: It's not that hard.

humane: (adj.) characterized by kindness, mercy, or compassion.

Lily Mooney, 4.30.2013

Brenda and Lily sit at a table SR in front of a large plate of food. Dan stands SL reading an index card.

DKH: "We will not allow a detainee to starve themselves to death, and we will continue to treat each person humanely," said Lt. Col. Samuel House, the prison spokesman."

LM: That's from an April 30th article in the New York Times about force-feeding at Guantanamo Bay.

BA: (nods)

When was the last time you ate?

(*Lily answers.*)

BA: Have some food.

LM: No, I don't want any.

BA: Okay. That's okay.

Brenda takes the food and walks offstage.

LM: Dan, what do you think it would take for you to go on a hunger strike? How bad would it have to be?

(*Dan answers honestly.*)

LM: Can you read that quote again?

DKH: "We will not allow a detainee to starve themselves to death, and we will continue to treat each person humanely."

LM: Thanks.

Beat. Curtain.

The Neo-Futurists Present: The United States
Invasion and Occupation of Afghanistan and Iraq
by Trent Lunsford (2021)

Trent compiles all archive plays on
this topic.

Next