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July 27, 1972

HOWARD
ROSENSTONE - 1

Mr. David Cole
137 Cottage Street
New Haven, Connecticut

Dear Mr. Cole:

Thank you very much for letting me read your plays, "The Reason of Timmy's Playing" and "Lost In The Process" which I am returning to you herewith.

I found both of these plays to have basically interesting ideas and they are both skillfully executed, but, unfortunately I do not feel that you went far enough in either case to make these plays emerge with real impact. In other words, the curtain falls in both cases with an "Oh" rather than a "wow". I do hope that you will re-examine these plays and do additional work. In any case, I would be very interested in reading your next play.

Thank you for thinking of me.

Kindest regards.

Sincerely


Howard Rosenstone

HR:lw
Enclosures

137 Cottage St.
New Haven, Conn. 06511
April 11, 1978

Mr. Howard Rosenstone
850 7th Avenue
New York, N.Y. 10019

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ROSENSTONE

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Dear Mr. Rosenstone:

Several years back, at the suggestion of Howard Stein, you read two short plays of mine which you described as "skillfully executed," but leaving the impression of "and'oh' rather than a 'wow'." You also wrote: "I would be very interested in reading your next play." (I enclose a xerox of the letter of yours from which I'm quoting.)

Here is that "next play"--4½ years in the writing, just recently completed. My first step was to show it to Stanley Kauffmann, who had devoted his New Republic column to a highly favorable review of my book, The Theatrical Event (Wesleyan, 1975; paperback, 1977)--I also enclose a copy of this review. Stanley thought well enough of the play to recommend it to the literary manager of one of the New York showcase theatres. This woman phoned and asked me to send it to her, which I have done. This is my most tangible prospect for production so far.

I should mention that I have, in the past, had workshop or full productions of 8 of my plays--at the Circle-in-the-Square (1965), the Theatre Company of Boston (1967) and by various theatre groups around Cambridge and Harvard in the early and mid-'60's.

The Moments of the Wandering Jew is complex--verbally, visually and structurally. It is also far away from most of what is going on in the American theatre right now. For that reason, I feel it needs to "come recommended"--not (I hope) that it requires puffing more than other scripts, but that it requires defusing of stock-assumptions more than other scripts.

One practical point: The play is long, and it is quite possible there will be cases of managements impressed by the script, but reluctant to commit themselves to full productions. Stanley Kauffmann felt--and I feel--that there are several sections "detachable" enough to be done on their own by a showcase theatre, as part of a "Sunday night" staged-reading series, or in the experimental "second" theatre of a regional rep. I am also amenable to the publication of excerpts from the play in journals, anthologies of new writing, etc. In either case --on the stage or in print--the object would be the same: to

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to gradually build toward a production of the whole by building up interest in the parts/

I think this time I have written a play to which, in the words of your earlier letter to me, your reaction will be a "wow." I can't quite imagine anyone's reaction to it being an "oh."

Sincerely yours,

David Cole

137 Cottage St.
New Haven, Conn. 06511

Phone: 203-624-3982 (afternoons and evenings)

enclosures:

1. script of The Moments of the Wandering Jew
2. copy of Stanley Kauffmann's review of David Cole's book
3. xerox of letter from Howard Rosenstone to David Cole