

Aug 15, 1983

introductory remarks for  
Princeton reading of  
The Reason of Timmy's Playing (1970)  
dir. Sandy Moskowitz

The first play, a monologue  
called The Reason of Timmy's  
Playing, is in the form of a  
curtain-speech given by a  
violinist who has just completed  
a performance of  
the Sibelius violin concerto.

The violinist plays the  
last few measures of the  
concerto, acknowledges  
the applause, then puts up  
his hand for silence and  
addresses the audience.

*[Faint, mostly illegible text from the reverse side of the page, possibly bleed-through or a second page of notes.]*

# NEWS



For Release: Immediately

Contact: Andrew J. Dvosin  
799-2863

Theater of the Open Eye  
316 East 88th Street  
New York, N.Y. 10028

Press release for October 1979  
Equity Showcase production of  
The Moments of the Wandering Jew, Part IV:  
The Hochhimmelfahrt Passion Play

Artistic Director: Jean Erds  
Administrative Director: Nola Hagl  
Business Office: 534-6363

David Cole's play The Moments of the Wandering Jew, starring Nicholas Kepros will have its premiere at the Theater of the Open Eye Tuesday through Sunday at 8 p.m. from October 16 to 21 and October 23 to 28. Tickets are \$3 or TDF voucher. Critics may call the theater box office 534-6363 for tickets.

The Moments of the Wandering Jew is a self-contained excerpt from a larger play of the same title. It deals with the life through the ages of Simon Laquedem, the mythical Wandering Jew, the artisan in front of whose shop Christ stopped while carrying the cross, only to be told to get moving. Laquedem was then condemned to wander the earth until he meets Christ again on Judgment Day. The Hochhimmelfahrt Passion Play, the subtitle of the section being presented, focuses on an incognito visit by the Wandering Jew to an Oberammergau-like theater in 19th century Germany where a new version of the Passion Play is in preparation.

In its examination of the myths of the Jew in Christian society, the play may irritate, or at least provoke, both Jew and Christian. On another level, as the Wandering Jew tries to relive his baffling encounter with Christ, he is the archetype of the man obsessed with finding purpose and meaning in an absurd world. While intellectually challenging, the play is highly entertaining, full of humor, irony and moments of low-comedy slapstick.

The playwright, David Cole, is a distinguished scholar-playwright who has had plays performed at Circle in the Square in New York and the Loeb Drama Center at Harvard. His book The Theatrical Event (Wesleyan U. Press, 1975) was highly praised in Stanley Kauffmann's review in The New Republic.

Nicholas Kepros, the Wandering Jew, was seen most recently on television in the title role in Herman Melville's Bartleby, which received the award for best drama on PBS for 1978. In addition the play features Zack Matlock in the role of the Burgermeister, Marc Jordan and the Jewish Inspector, John Michalski as the Director, Brian Myehl as the Hochhimmelfahrt Wandering Jew and Martin Barolsky as the Hochhimmelfahrt Christus.

Bevya Rosten, the director, has been working on the play with David Cole for nearly a year. As Associate Director with the Theater of the Open Eye, she directed staged readings of several portions of the play. Rebecca Schull, the producer, is an actress who appeared as Fefu in the Obie award play Fefu and Her Friends and will be seen in Yulya on PBS this January.

Summary, by David Cole, of his  
Moments of the Wandering Jew

The Moments of the Wandering Jew

David Cole

The legend of the Wandering Jew, in its basic form, is as follows: Carrying His cross along through the streets of Jerusalem, the Savior stopped to rest for a moment beside the shop of an artisan, one Simon Laquedem. The artisan, however, told Him to get moving. "I go," replied the Savior, "but thou shalt wander till my return." Since that day the Jew has wandered unceasingly. His wandering will have an end only when he and Christ meet a second time, on Judgment Day.

No one knows where or by whom this story was told for the first time. It does not appear in the Bible. It is similar to, but cannot be shown to derive from, such myths of punishment by wandering as those of the Flying Dutchman, the Demon Huntsman and Cain. Neither specifically Jewish nor specifically Christian in origin, the legend has, at various times, been taken as critical of the Jews for their rejection of Christ, and of Christian society for its harsh treatment of the Jews.

In David Cole's play, the Wandering Jew's "offense" is to have beheld the Savior staggering along under the beams of the cross and to have seen in this no more than a bare, if suggestive, geometrical image: ~~a~~ His centuries of wandering then become a long quest after the meaning of this symbol, which he discovers in, or projects onto, every situation in which he finds himself: encounters with legendary figures like Pontius Pilate and the Three Magi; an appearance before the "Inquisition"; a confrontation with an old man who, crazed by the loss of his family and home in a pogrom, imagines himself to be the Wandering Jew; a parting from a woman who has allowed herself to love the Wandering Jew; an incognito visit to an Oberammergau-like Passion Play, to help with the selection of a new Wandering Jew-sequence; and, finally, the Last Judgment itself.

The play is about living with the consequences of a perception. Having once seen with terrible clarity, how does one go on from there; and in particular, how does a person in such a dilemma stay in touch with the simple, immediate, personal side of experience. It is not a play about the suffering of the artist or intellectual; it is a play about what the suffering of the artist or intellectual has in common with other kinds of suffering. The "moments" of the Wandering Jew are anyone's moments of isolation, obsessive quest and painful lucidity.

summary, by David Cole, of  
the Wandering Jew legend,  
as treated in The Moments of the Wandering Jew

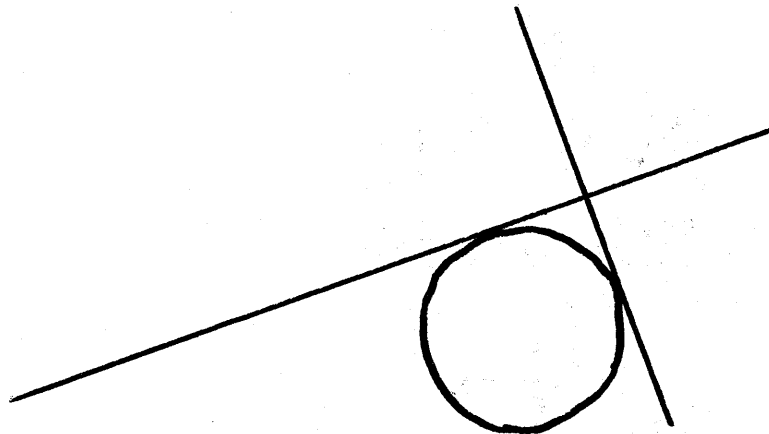
b. 1

The Basic Form of the Wandering Jew Legend

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What the Wandering Jew saw when he looked at Christ carrying the cross:



- Atlanta, Emory  
- March 22, 1990

f.2

Synopsis prepared by Ellie Fuchs for her  
Theatrical class

March 22, 1990

Summary of  
prepared by  
Ellie Fuchs for  
her Atlanta  
(Emory University)  
"Theatricalism" course

The Moments of the Wandering Jew  
by David Cole

SYNOPSIS

Part One

Scene 1. With the Neighbor. Simon Laquedem, a Jerusalem potter, the same who shooed the Savior from his shop as He came staggering by with the cross, and to whom Jesus said, "I go, but thou, wander till I return," has suddenly conceived a desire to take to the road. Has his obsession anything to do with the silent Trumpet Angel who appears behind him? His neighbor, the rope-maker, cannot dissuade him from such an impractical plan. It comes out that Simon laughed at the spectacle of the staggering Christ. Not out of derision, but more like recognition. He claims he saw in the image of man beneath cross an abstract form -- a circle or wheel beneath a tilted cruciform, an aesthetic perception taken at a critical distance.

Scene 2. A Sample Itinerary. The Jew Simon is on his way to the Roman capital of Palestine, Caesarea. En route he encounters three Kings following a star that they themselves hold, and a Greek goddess who is wearing herself into a deepening rut. The Jew's path is also self-willed; he rolls a path-like cloth out before himself, then walks it as if he were just discovering it.

Scene 3. With Pontius Pilate. Pilate reclining, continuously soaps himself, eternally condemned to "wash his hands" of the affair. Pilate tries to talk Simon -- whom he has known as a double agent (a Jew working for Rome) -- out of his abstract decision to "take to the road," and back into connectedness to people and things -- into history. Simon's answer is a definitive, echoing question, What is History?

Part Two

Scene 1. In the Chamber of Curiosity. Simon has become the Wandering Jew. Wandering into late medieval Rouen, he has just lobbed a brick through a stained-glass Rose window depicting -- the Wandering Jew (Simon doesn't like the depiction). Now he is being detained and questioned by a tribunal of Examiners. If they can prove him to be the "real" Wandering Jew, good luck will come to their town, or so the by now elaborately developed story goes. Unable to recognize the proof before their eyes, the Examiners release the WJ just as an outside crowd, outraged by the vandalism (the brick), launch a pogrom in Rouen's Jewish ghetto.

Scene 2. The Wandering Jew the World has been Waiting For. The WJ sits outside the town while explosions rock the Ghetto. Enter a Jew with long white beard, staff, burlap robe, rope belt. He is full of histrionics about being the Wandering Jew. The two men have a curious discussion, a kind of rivalry of authenticity. Finally the "real" WJ wins. Why? His peculiar detachment from emotion and suffering, his vocation for being "on the outside," cannot be matched by the Pretender, even if he does look the part.

Part Three.

Scene 1. The Hochhimmelfahrt Passion Play.

Part Four.

Scene 1. The Woman Who Loved the Wandering Jew. While the Jew sleeps next to her, a Woman sits up in bed, catching sight of the Trumpet Angel, the silent being who has dogged the Jew's steps through eternity (or history?). The Woman wants to keep the Angel from trumpeting the Jew on, and away from her, "but there's no way of getting close to him at all except by plunging headalong into that preoccupation of his that starts three paces past the point where human problems end."

Scene 2. The Curtain Rises on the End of the World. Everything is ready for Armagedden. Supervised by two high-ranking angels, (who played Burgermeister and Director in Part Three), the end is imminent. News pours in from all corners of the universe. The Messiah's chariot is on course, the Apocalypse is on a go-status. Everyone waits for the WJ to remove his sandals. One drops, tentatively. But the other? The Jew is doubtful. "'End?' In what sense?" The Jew shrugs off the excitement. "You can't walk away from what's happening to the entire world!" And the WJ: "There's nothing I can't walk away from." So it happens that the Apocalypse grinds to a screeching halt. And then.....(read last five pages.)

~~Not with the Jew as most~~  
~~summary of Moments of the Wandering Jew~~

"the arc"

6/29/95 summary of Moments of the Wandering Jew  
prepared for meetings with ROBERT WOODRUFF  
BOI

- Hochtt. most self-contained, most appealing sect.
- Starting w/ Hochtt-like starting w/ Act III of Leone. You'd have a char. in an extreme state of dispossessed consciousness w/out any indication how he got there. Why is WJ incognito, why doesn't he just come forward and lay claim to his <sup>own</sup> identity? Pts I & II show why this has become impossible for him. ~~by~~ the beginning of Hochtt.

ONE. 1) (w/ THE NEIGHBOR)

earliest stage of being WJ: ~~a kind~~

- ① a ~~body~~ & mental jumpiness
- ② being a step (jump) ahead in dialogue
- ③ a ~~B~~ reeling back for what he has seen
- ④ a backing off from ~~the~~ acknowledging what he has become

All these qualities of <sup>WJ at</sup> ~~earliest~~ earliest style ~~get~~ get ~~more~~ physicalized in action of scene - become actual jumpiness, reeling back, backing off getting a step ahead

Until finally ONE. 1. 9 twenty feet of space open out betw/ WJ & NEIGHB. As NEIGHB. says, "you can't argue w/ 20 feet of space"

(ONE. ii) A SAMPLE ITINERARY: 3 KINGS, GODDESS FUTURA  
 Still "~~backing~~ away" (literally) from  
 the recognition of what's happened to him,  
 the WJ sets off by Jerusalem to  
 Caesarea - from the spiritual to the  
 everyday world, ~~from~~ just:  
 from here to there - he wishes!

Instead, he stumbles into a series  
 of encounters - <sup>with</sup> the 3 Kings, <sup>with</sup> the Goddess  
 Futura - later, <sup>with</sup> Pontius Pilate - that  
 he tries desperately to persuade himself  
 are real meetings with real other people  
 but are all too clearly ~~through~~ <sup>emblems or symbols</sup>  
~~his own situation~~ <sup>of his own condition</sup>

(ONE. ii. 10) These aren't experiences; these  
 are images happening to a person

And specifically <sup>(they are)</sup> ~~of~~ <sup>images</sup> of his own  
 sit. as WJ

It begins to dawn on him that  
 this is what being the WJ is, going  
 to be like (:) no actual travelling,  
 ("The WJ never takes a step" (ONE. ii. 11))  
 among places, people or events, but rather  
 an endless wandering ~~among~~ among competing versions  
 of "the WJ - ~~figure~~ <sup>versions that</sup> ~~that~~ challenge his own version at every stop

ONE, iii (WITH PONTIUS PILATE)

Stepping outside (as he supposes) of this round of symbolic encounters, ~~he~~ he ~~passes a visit to~~ calls on his old employer, Pontius Pilate, for advice on how to handle having your life turned into an allegory - Pilate, too, after all is having to deal with this question.

(Part of the Legend that WJ is a spy for PP)  
Pilate is full of sensible advice about how <sup>one could see this all as a</sup> ~~subjective state~~ ~~kind of mad~~; how one has to reclaim one's life, live in ~~the~~ the real world, etc.

Just one little thing, (All through the scene PP is compulsively washing <sup>all over his body. His New Testament gift, hand washing,</sup> ~~himself - that is, Pilate's washcloth, too,~~ ~~to be~~ has "spread" to his whole body, his whole existence - and Pilate ~~himself~~ seems completely unaware of ~~it~~ this when Pilate "drops the soap" & pauses ~~to return it to him~~ WJ realizes ~~it's~~ like 3 Kings & Goddess Futuro, ~~no more image of~~ <sup>this own condition-</sup> ~~that's~~ ~~it~~ ~~self~~ "life you owe" to

So, by end of Pt One (AP-scene),  
WT realizes there is no going back  
(to ordinary life) no going on in any  
literal geographical sense ("The WT never takes a step")

His "journey" as WT will be  
to go on encountering one after another  
version of ~~his destiny~~ <sup>the</sup> WT-figure  
His problem - his project - is  
make his own version of the figure  
prevail over all competing versions.

Pt. TWO, Sc. 1) "IN THE CHAMBER OF CURIOSITY"  
His first stab at making his own  
image ~~prevail~~ <sup>prevail</sup> of the WT prevail over  
~~the competing~~ <sup>of</sup> stereotypes.

1.1.14  
DICE EX  
who would have  
exposed the  
inadequacy of  
conceptions  
of himself to be  
made of  
concern  
thems?  
Perhaps  
principal  
occupation

The specifics of this situation seem odd:  
- He sails into town on somebody's funeral ship  
- he commits an act of vandalism by  
tossing a brick thru a stained glass  
image of WT  
- 3 Examiners question him, ostensibly  
about this vandalism but really about  
his identity as WT, <sup>which intrigues them</sup> because there's  
a <sup>town</sup> prophecy "When the WT is near,  
Savior is not far"

and yet ~~but~~ <sup>this set of</sup> As I say, ~~the~~ specifications seem odd,  
~~the~~ WT insists (#. 1. 24)

"This is every town I have ever visited,  
This is the one situation in which I  
ever find myself."

By which he means: The real  
WT is ~~bound to be~~ perceived as a  
"vandal" who shatters the conventional  
image of "the WT". And ~~this goes along~~  
with his own new determination <sup>to make his own image of</sup>  
~~WT prevail~~ ~~his true aim or project~~

How does he plan to do ~~this~~ this??

(#. 1. 25) "I expected to come across ...  
for it to be sufficient ... not to have to say:

That is, he expected <sup>simply to ring true</sup> ~~to shine~~ for all to see, <sup>to be</sup> ~~just~~  
<sup>acknowledged</sup> ~~his~~ <sup>WT</sup> ~~letting~~ <sup>simply by</sup> his authentic voice ~~to be heard~~ <sup>to be</sup>

But that doesn't happen. The  
EXAMINERS rule him out ~~as~~ WT on a technicality,  
~~whereupon he~~ realizes he's been too  
passive, he can't expect to "just ring true,"  
he's got to actively put forward a WT-image  
of his own; and as a first step, he offers to  
replace the stained glass WT he shattered, with  
an image of his own design.  
But the Examiners aren't interested; they  
push him out the back door.

II.ii. THE WJ THE WORLD HAS BEEN WAITING FOR

Full of his new resolve to take <sup>masterful, shaping</sup> ~~action~~ control of the WJ - <sup>the first thing</sup> the WJ comes up against is a far more <sup>persuasive</sup> ~~title~~ claimant to the "the WJ the World Has Been Waiting for," complete with robe, staff + Jewish angst, etc. an Old Man - <sup>named</sup> Schetzel, who has lost 3 children in a pogrom and, crazed with grief, has persuaded himself he's the WJ.

WJ can't talk the OM out of it; besides, the OM shows a real affinity for the role - why not let him have it? The WJ is tempted - but hates the idea of doing to another what <sup>was</sup> done to him, i.e., setting ~~that other~~ <sup>that other</sup> as (the next) WJ.

Meanwhile the Old Man, <sup>horrified</sup> at WJ's callousness in using <sup>blood</sup> ~~shed~~ <sup>shed</sup> on the road to draw a diagram, <sup>with</sup> decides he (the OM) is going to let <sup>the</sup> WJ have ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> WJ role, <sup>on</sup> ~~on~~ <sup>grounds</sup> that anyone who draws <sup>pictures</sup> ~~order~~ <sup>blood</sup> isn't up to being a ~~decent~~ <sup>decent</sup> human being, let him be the WJ.

So much for the WJ's resolve, at end of the Examiners scene, to take active, shaping, control of the WJ-figure.

Instead, he - the "actual" WJ - has been completely dispossessed, <sup>bounced out of</sup> himself, by a more plausible claimant.

It is in this state of disenfranchisement dispossession, that the WJ enters HOCHHIMMELFAHRT, enters the modern world, incognito, as Mr. Solomon Ash.

He isn't just concealing his identity, he has lost it, and he must now try, by indirect means, ~~to get it back~~ ~~by pretending to be Mr. Solomon Ash~~ ~~some other~~ ~~that~~ to win it back, ~~to win~~ or better ~~to win~~ for the first time, the power to define or create the role on his own terms.

II. i. 5 (mid)  
The Jew enters the modern world and it is not the Jew at all but a phantom who resembles him better than he knows how to resemble himself.

# summary by David Cole of The Responses

The Responses by David Cole SYNOPSIS

David Cole's play The Responses is based on the ancient (and ongoing) Jewish practice of responsa-writing, in which rabbinical authorities receive and respond to letters of inquiry from all over the world concerning unresolved points of religious observance, spirituality and law. The rabbis' answers (responsa) are subsequently collected, published and themselves become part of the body of Jewish teaching.

At the opening of The Responses, one such responsa-writing RABBI sits dictating his replies to a series of letters of inquiry which his SCRIBE is reading to him.

Gradually, the RABBI's answers begin to drift off the point of the particular questions raised by the letters, as he finds himself more and more in the grip of--and more and more compelled to recount to the SCRIBE--a powerful recollection welling up in him. The SCRIBE is at first impatient and tries to bring his master back to the task at hand; but at length he, too, becomes caught up in the RABBI's story.

The experience which the RABBI recalls and recounts to the SCRIBE is as follows: Once, when he was a young scholar, he found himself on a deserted beach at night, in search of the answer to a certain inquiry he had received. Suddenly, out of nowhere, he became aware of a sound like no other he had ever heard, a tremendous Roar of voices that did not seem to be arising from anyone or anything on the scene, but simply arose. Attending more closely, the young RABBI began to make out individual voices and realized that what they were voicing was the answer to every possible responsa-inquiry, past, present or to come. Setting forth to navigate--to "go out upon"--the Roar, the RABBI discovers he now has direct access to the voices of tradition, to new voices, and, ultimately, to his own voice. It is by preserving and extending his access to this world of living voices that the RABBI became--and remains--the much-consulted responsa-writer he is today.

Now, as the RABBI finishes his account, the SCRIBE begins to hear coming up around him the very Roar of questioning voices which the RABBI has just been describing to him. As he, like the RABBI before him, begins to move into and through the complex sound, the RABBI himself is enabled to move on and out past it, to a silence beyond questions and beyond question.

received Thurs., March 8, 1984

Program info for  
1984 McCarter reading  
of The Gods of the Theatre



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McCARTER THEATRE • Center for the Performing Arts • 91 University Place • Princeton, New Jersey 08540  
Nagle Jackson • Artistic Director Alison Harris • Managing Director

March 2, 1984

David Cole  
c/o Orden  
27 East 13th St., Apt. 4H  
New York, NY 10003

RE: Bio

Dear Mr. Cole:

Your playreading is quickly approaching. Please send us a fifty word biography for the program. If you are bringing in your own director, please enclose his/her bio with yours.

Sincerely,

*Sandra L. Moskowitz*

Sandra Moskowitz  
Outreach Intern

SLM/aak

SANDRA MUSKOVITZ  
McCARTER THEATRE  
91 UNIVERSITY PLACE  
PRINCETON, NEW JERSEY 08540

March 15, 1984

Dear Sandra

Here is the "50-word bio" you requested for the program of my April 23 reading:

DAVID COLE's plays have been done in New York at the Circle-in-the-Square, the American Place, the South Street Theatre, the Theatre of the Open Eye and the Gene Frankel Theatre. His book, The Theatrical Event (Wesleyan paperback) deals with shamanism and possession experience in relation to acting.

Also, re: that program, please be sure and print the title and subtitle of the play on it, i.e.

The Gods of the Theatre  
or  
A Passion for Dawn

As I said on the phone yesterday, I'd appreciate your sending me 50-100 fliers for the reading series at my New Haven address (137 Cottage St, New Haven, Conn 06511)

And please tell Rob he'll soon be receiving a letter from me with some thoughts about the reading.

Thank you

David Cole

Summary by David Cole of  
his play Troy Wins!

C. 2006-7

Troy Wins! or, The Sunday Painter

A Verse-Play in One Act

(2M, 1F; one set; playing time: 1½ hours)

SYNOPSIS

On the last day of the Trojan War, with the Horse already drawn up before the gates, a TROJAN PRAYER, acting on her own initiative, seeks out ZEUS on Olympus to urge the deliverance of her town.

She finds, however, that she is dealing with a Zeus who has laid aside his godhead to pursue a career in art; and, unfortunately for her mission, the next big project this "Sunday Painter" contemplates is a cycle of paintings on the Fall of Troy.

Working with what she's got, the TROJAN PRAYER strives to persuade the fledgling artist that it would be more original to paint Troy's Triumph--and more original still to devise some bold new medium in which to render this bold new theme: say, an onsite installation of "Destroyed Wooden Horse" in pre-charred pine . . . .

ZEUS seems won over, is just raising his thunderbolt to finish off the Horse, when an outraged HERMES appears: Has Zeus forgotten his promise that the very next work from his hand shall be a portrait of him, Hermes? Reluctantly, ZEUS lowers his bolt . . . .

brief summaries by David Cole of 3 of his plays

1985/86 Update \_\_\_\_\_

THE DRAMATIST/DIRECTOR EXCHANGE

(Please Type or Print)

NAME David Cole

ADDRESS 137 Cottage St., New Haven, Conn. 06511

PHONE (DAY) [REDACTED] (EVENING) 203-624-3982 (SERVICE) \_\_\_\_\_

AGENT'S NAME \_\_\_\_\_ AGENT'S PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

Title	Nature of Work (Play, Musical, etc)	Produced or Published by	Date
THE MOMENTS OF THE WANDERING JEW	Play	Thtr. of the Open Eye McCarter Theatre	1979 1980
THE RESPONSES	play	South St. Theatre American Place	1981 1982
THE GODS OF THE THEATRE	play	Jean Cocteau Rep. McCarter Theatre	1983 1984

Descriptions: (Include title, number of characters, genre, set requirements, and brief synopsis of no more than three plays or musicals)

THE MOMENTS OF THE WANDERING JEW (3M 2F, unit set) Ironic-visionary treatment of the "Wandering Jew", the legendary figure who cursed Christ and was condemned to wander till Judgment Day. WJ shown "on the road", with Pontius Pilate, before the Inquisition, attending rehearsals of an Oberammergau-like Passion Play that features a Wandering Jew scene, with the woman who loves him, meeting another claimant to the WJ-title, and at the Last Judgment (which he rescinds).

THE RESPONSES (3M, single setting) A Rabbi sits answering letters of inquiry which his Scribe reads off to him; gradually his answers begin to drift off the questions into a visionary reminiscence that opens the stage onto another world.

THE GODS OF THE THEATRE (4M 1F, unit set) A metaphysical backstage comedy about a deus ex machina in the Greek Theatre who ~~x~~ can't get down onto the stage.

Additional Notes:

Return the completed questionnaire to The Dramatists Guild. The Guild will make the above information available to interested directors. DO NOT SEND SCRIPTS TO THE GUILD AS WE CAN NOT KEEP THEM OR RETURN THEM TO YOU.