

# The Best Show Never Seen

*By Alan Heckner*

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### **DEDICATION**

*For Gordon and Mileva ...  
YOU are the best show never seen!*

### **SYNOPSIS**

Summer St. Silver, an ultra-avant-garde director, is asked by Ms. Francis, the overly positive counselor of the middle school, to bring its students together by putting on a play for the state competition. Summer accepts, not knowing the trials and tribulations she will have to endure. It's an ultimate clash of personalities from the hilarious auditions, the disastrous rehearsal process, to the cast's big blow-up. Each character offers his or her unabashed thoughts and ridiculously critical opinions in the form of "confessionals" to the audience. When Summer sees no hope in sight and decides to quit the show, the cast pulls together one last time to convince her to stay on and help them win the competition. Even the writer, who herself had quit over "artistic differences," comes back to make amends and finish what they started. In the end, they do perform their play at the one-act festival, only to find out they were in the wrong theatre. And as it turns out, no one saw the play, thus making it the best show never seen! Running time: approximately 45 minutes.

### **ORIGINAL PRODUCTION**

This play made its debut at Thornton Middle School, Cy-Fair School District, in Katy, Texas in March, 2007. It was also presented at the Cy-Fair Middle School One-Act Play Festival in April, 2007 where the students playing Summer St. Silver and Erica Gaterman won all-star cast awards and the cast itself received an ensemble acting award.

## **CAST OF CHARACTERS**

*(3 m, 7 w)*

**SUMMER ST. SILVER:** The director.

**BIANCA:** The prima donna.

**ERICA:** The drama club president.

**GEORGE:** The boyfriend.

**MARTHA:** The girlfriend.

**WEST VIRGINIA WOOLF:** The writer.

**NANCY FRANCIS:** The counselor.

**GERTRUDE:** The parent.

**MIGUEL BERKS:** The newbie.

**DWIGHT ROOT:** The one-liner.

## **PRODUCTION NOTES**

This is an ideal play for middle schools/junior high schools. The director is given much flexibility with the staging, presentation and design of the show. From adding extra actors in certain scenes (*Such as the rehearsal/full cast scenes*) to the use of props, set pieces and sound, so many things are left to the director's discretion in terms of creativity. The show was originally produced on a low budget, so schools of any economic status can perform it. And in terms of story and content, audiences of both kids and adults will enjoy the humor and entertainment presented.

## **SETTING**

The stage may be set with as many or few set pieces as desired, including theatrical memorabilia scattered about. The confessionals are seats set on the apron of the stage downstage right or downstage left. All confessionals are monologues delivered to the audience by the characters.

## **PROPS LIST**

Kite	Lemon
Bull horn	Cup of coffee
Crutches	Pencil

*(Other props may be used at director's discretion.)*

## **The Best Show Never Seen**

SUMMER: (*Confessional.*) When Perry Middle School came to me and asked me to direct a show for them, I wasn't so sure I wanted to do it. But I talked extensively to Mrs. Nancy Francis, their school counselor, and I found out that this was a school that had no theatre teacher, in fact, no real theatre program, and that made me think "What if I was in a school that was like this? Wouldn't I want someone with artistic know-how and a creative vision to direct my play, if there was a play." And I thought about the poor children who were suffering without someone like me, without an inspiring theatre teacher and director, and that motivated me to say, "Yes, I will do it...for the children." And it angered me to know that there are schools like Perry that lack a theatre program, that don't have the most beautiful art form in the history of the world...you know, theatre. How can a public school exist without theatre? A school that doesn't teach its children theatre should be arrested. They should be arrested and charged with...with...well, something, I don't know what. I never was that into criminal justice...but they should definitely be arrested and charged for something...maybe child abuse. Anyway, once I had everything arranged, I couldn't wait for the auditions.

*(Scene shift to stage. It is the auditions.)*

ERICA: (*Angry.*) How many times must we go over this?!? I told you...you never loved me! You never provided for me! You never bought me a pony! You're the worst parents ever!! Why did you even have me?! Why couldn't you just get a puppy or a computer or something?! It's not like I asked to be here!! And then you complain about my temper!!! You made me!! It's your creation!!! Don't blame a bird for flying, a fish for swimming, or a...a...a kid for farting after eating 3 spicy burritos and a flaming tortilla!

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ERICA: *(Cont.)* I can't help mother nature!!! You two are the worst parents ever!! I hate you! I hate you, I hate you!

GEORGE: *(Singing.)* Do you think I'm craaaaaazy?... Should I be craaaaaazy?...You could be craaaaaazy...like meeeee.

MARTHA: Romeo, Romeo, wherefore art thou Romeo? I tried calling you on your cell, but it keeps going straight to voicemail. You haven't returned any of my messages, and it's been almost 15 minutes since I last called. Did you lose my number? I e-mailed it to you 7 times today just in case you did. Please, Romeo. Please call me...I know we've only gone out on one date, but I think what we have here is special. I don't care what my parents say about your family, I love you!

BIANCA: *(In an exaggerated Southern accent.)* Why, I do declare you are the handsomest gentleman caller I ever did meet. So kind and charming...why I just don't think I've ever seen such a man. My heart beats faster every time I hear your voice, and my knees quiver every time I smell that musky scent you wear. I've never been short on suitors, but I must confess that very few have had the spellbinding effect on me that you have. What did you say your name was again?

DWIGHT: And now, I'm going to juggle while reciting a soliloquy from *Hamlet*. *(Begins to juggle.)* To be, or not to be...that is the question... *(Drops balls while reciting and begins over every time he does so.)* Hold on!...Okay. To be, or... *(Drops balls again.)* Okay, now really, this time I can do it... To be, or not to be...

MIGUEL: Mary had a little lamb, whose fleece was white as snow. And every where that Mary went, that lamb was sure to go. And if you want, you can find Mary's little lamb at your local grocery store.

*(Scene shift to confessional.)*

WEST VIRGINIA: (*Confessional.*) When I wrote this play, I felt like I was fulfilling my destiny...that the gods of literature were taking over my body and writing it for me. I've always had an ability to write and create truly artistic stories. I've been told that the first thing I ever wrote was when I was one and a half years old. It was a poem about how tough potty training was and how pooping in diapers was just easier. Anyway, my parents' love for literature was how I got my name, West Virginia Woolf...after Virginia Woolf, the famous female author. But I'm not Virginia...I'm West Virginia, the state just next to her. I guess it was just natural that I would end up writing, in my opinion, one of the greatest musicals ever when I wrote this play for Perry Middle School... "Alamo: The Musical." I wanted to combine the historical relevance of this moment in American history with one of America's greatest contributions to the evolution of theatre, the modern day musical. As a writer, there's a constant struggle to get your message across. Ever since I was little, I've had problems with people not understanding me. Every time I talk to people, they think I'm saying something when I'm really not. They think I'm speaking Chinese or German or something...well, I'm not! They're the ones speaking Chinese!! They're the ones speaking German or French...or Canadian! Nobody understands me!! (*Buries her head in her hands, crying.*)

(*Scene shift to stage. It is post auditions.*)

GEORGE: You were great, Martha.

MARTHA: No George, YOU were great. I don't think I've ever seen you give such a great audition.

GEORGE: Awww, thanks, Martha. You're right, I did do pretty good.

BIANCA: Not as good as I did. Nobody ever does as good as me. That's why I'm the best actress in every play I'm in...and even the ones I'm not in.

ERICA: Bianca, get over yourself. You think you're such hot--

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