

CONFORM!

*A play in one act
by Reid Conrad*

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STORY OF THE PLAY

“Conform” is an absurdist farce which takes place in a park where three men in boxes comment on humanity and the passersby who frequent their territory. They urge one and all to conform to the constraints of society, but in the end it is they who must practice what they preach. Through the use of stereotype, cliché and controversial comments, the characters humorously expose their flaws and allow the audience to laugh at some of their own shortcomings.

Running Time: Approximately 30 minutes.

ORIGINAL PRODUCTION

This play was first performed at Daytona Beach Community College for the District III Thespian One-Act Festival in January, 2007, and later at the Florida State Thespian Festival in Tampa in April, 2007.

The original cast:

EVERETT: Aaron Green

ROBINSON: Alex Glover

THEOBALD: Ryan Bathurst

STREET LADY: Rachel Schimenti

GLADYS: Calle Secunda

MILTON: Alex Simon

KITTY: Mary Beth Knight

MA-GRET: Stephanie Lloyd

DOLORES: Tara Cunningham

The crew:

Stage Manager: Lindsey Akins

Technician: Josh Menassa

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CAST OF CHARACTERS

(4 m, 5 w)

EVERETT: A relatively astute man.

ROBINSON: His somewhat naïve friend..

THEOBALD: His slightly ridiculous friend.

STREET LADY: A vagrant foreigner.

GLADYS: Lovingly desperate.

MILTON: Desperately in love.

KITTY: A sunny disposition.

MA-GRET: Dramatically artistic.

DOLORES: Ever the pessimist.

SETTING/PROPS

3 large, appliance-sized boxes

park bench

3 plates, forks

3 toothbrushes

3 derby hats

2 purses

bed pillow, blanket, hot water bottle

easily-removed boot for Street Lady

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(AT RISE: THREE GENTLEMEN, identically dressed, stand inside of three identical boxes next to each other on a sidewalk in a park. The boxes are cut to afford the audience a view of each actor from just below their armpits and each box has a door cut out upstage for entrance and exit.)

EVERETT: Good morning!

ROBINSON: Good morning!

THEOBALD: Good morning!

EVERETT: Marvelous morning, isn't it? *(Stretching out his arms.)*

ROBINSON: Smell that fresh air! *(Giant inhale of breath.)*

THEOBALD: Makes you glad to be alive! *(Looks heavenward.)*

EVERETT: Breakfast first, gentlemen? Or exercise?

ROBINSON: A quick jog around the park in the crisp morning air might do just the trick.

EVERETT: A capital idea!

THEOBALD: Nothing like a good jog to whet the appetite.

EVERETT: Well, then. Let's be off!

ROBINSON: Before the crowds –

EVERETT: The loiterers –

THEOBALD: The homeless –

ALL: Spoil our day!

(The THREE GENTLEMEN start at the rear left of their boxes and simulate running. Bouncing their heads to the front, then turning left and crossing the front of the box, turning left again and jogging to the rear of the box, turning once again and finishing at the right rear. They face forward, slightly winded.)

EVERETT: Does a man good!

ROBINSON: Makes one feel alive!

THEOBALD: Gets the juices flowing.

EVERETT: Shall we breakfast, gentlemen?

ROBINSON: Excellent suggestion!

EVERETT: Thank you.

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ROBINSON: You are welcome. Most welcome.

THEOBALD: We are all most welcome.

ALL: Most welcome, indeed!

(The THREE GENTLEMEN produce small plates from which they pantomime the eating of their breakfasts.)

EVERETT: Read in the paper this morning –

ROBINSON: You didn't!

THEOBALD: Scandalous!

ROBINSON: But then you can't believe everything you read.

THEOBALD: I don't believe it!

EVERETT: It was right there in black and white.

ROBINSON: Well, there you have it.

THEOBALD: I rest my case!

EVERETT: Bleeding yellow liberalist journalism!

ROBINSON: All!

ALL: All!

(A moment of silence as the THREE GENTLEMEN contemplate the enormity of their lives as they finish their meals. Toothbrushes emerge after plates disappear, followed by a brief gargle, all in relative unison. After finishing their morning ritual they don derby hats and face blankly forward.)

THEOBALD: Almost flossed today.

(EVERETT and ROBINSON give THEOBALD a reproachful look.)

THEOBALD: But I decided against it.

ROBINSON: Let that be a lesson to you.

THEOBALD: Oh, it was.

ROBINSON: And well should have been.

THEOBALD: A lesson to be learned –

ROBINSON: is a lesson to be earned.

EVERETT: Gentlemen! *(The OTHERS turn.)* Observe.

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(The THREE GENTLEMEN are alerted to their first passerby of the day. A STREET LADY slowly makes her way across the stage.)

EVERETT: Look at her!

ROBINSON: Filthy!

THEOBALD: Disgusting!

EVERETT: Degenerate!

ROBINSON: Doesn't bathe.

EVERETT: Doesn't shave.

THEOBALD: Doesn't drive an Escalade!

ROBINSON: Primitive!

THEOBALD: Barbaric!

EVERETT: Immigrant!

(The STREET LADY is crossing the path of the three men.)

EVERETT: Good day to you, madam. *(Tips his hat, smiling.)*

ROBINSON: A refreshing nip in the air, wouldn't you agree?

(Does same.)

THEOBALD: They say we might have rain in the afternoon.

(Same.)

EVERETT: Doesn't understand a word we say!

ROBINSON: Ignorant as a block of wood!

THEOBALD: Thick as a brick. Tell me, madam, who does your hair? It's to die for!

ROBINSON: A jest!

EVERETT: Bravo!

ROBINSON: Shall we join in?

EVERETT: Certainly!

ROBINSON: What of the consequences?

EVERETT: Mustn't think of that now, Robinson. Throw caution to the wind!

ROBINSON: Right you are, Everett!

EVERETT: Besides, she obviously doesn't speak the language!

ROBINSON: How shall I begin?

EVERETT: Degrade her!

THEOBALD: Abuse her!

End of Freeview

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