

MARK; MY WORDS

A Play Text by Don Druick

Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery Vernacular Series No. 3
Projects expressing the informal and the local

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Connecting Art and Life



MARK; MY WORDS
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A play in 9 scenes for 14 actors.

The time; the scenes are set variously as

- The present
- Ten years ago
- Ten years from now.

Characters (in order of appearance)

SHOE JACK
DUKE
ROSALITA
RAMBLER
CHORUS
TOTO
BRANDO
HAPPY
CRUEL
REAL BRANDO
GHOST OF FORMOSUS
DD
MARTHA
GEORGE

SCENE; On the rue de Rivoli

*Time, the present.
A sunny day in Paris.*

*DUKE and SHOE JACK walking.
Followed, at a short distance, by
ROSALITA and RAMBLER.*

Traffic and horns. Traffic and horns.

SHOE JACK (*singing*) Clang clang clang went the trolley.

DUKE That's it, that's it. That's the song. That's the very song.

DUKE turns to ROSALITA.

DUKE But, to carry on, as you well know I don't speak French.

ROSALITA I can hardly believe that.

DUKE Well, there it is.

ROSALITA Look at you.

DUKE Me?

ROSALITA So much chic. Even elegant.... if I squint a bit.

DUKE What's the point?

ROSALITA The point is: you look French.

DUKE Elegant?

RAMBLER Ha.

ROSALITA (*to RAMBLER*) Shut up. (*to DUKE*) You see, you are interested.

DUKE But I don't speak French.

RAMBLER Not even a word? Everyone speaks a little French. Say: non.

DUKE No.

RAMBLER You see - that's French, that's French.

DUKE But I don't speak French.

RAMBLER Come, I'll take you for a tasty little French meal. Follow the palate I always say... to the tongue. Chez Toto is just over there. You'll like Toto - he's quite quite crazy.

DUKE But I don't speak French.

RAMBLER But you eat and drink. Yes no yes? Come - we will find Calvados from Normandy....

DUKE I like Calvados.

RAMBLER Good. And mustard from Dijon, oil from Provence, and cheese - ah, the cheese - cheeses from everywhere.

DUKE But I don't speak French.

ROSALITA You are beginning to irritate me.

DUKE Ach....

*DUKE steps off the curb and is almost
run down by a passing Fiat.*

SHOE JACK Be careful. Don't you remember?

DUKE What?

SHOE JACK We're invisible right now.

ROSALITA Dear O dear.

RAMBLER How can that be? I can see you.

SHOE JACK But can they? The rest of them out there. Aha. I think not.

RAMBLER Crazy crazy that's it. You're crazy crazy just plain crazy.

SHOE JACK Like your buddy, Toto? You don't even know where I am. Cause I'm invisible.

RAMBLER You are crazy.

DUKE turns to RAMBLER.

DUKE Then how come I can't see you if you're not invisible?

RAMBLER But I'm right here.

SHOE JACK Are you? Are you indeed?

RAMBLER Shut up.

DUKE Aha.... aha.... now the crow sings instead of the calf.

*They pass an art gallery - they go in.
DUKE takes a canvas off the wall.*

ROSALITA What are you doing?

DUKE This is mine - I lent it to them for their show. An original.... by somebody.

ROSALITA Well you can't just take it.

DUKE Why not? Its mine. Anyway, we're invisible.

RAMBLER When did you get that painting?

DUKE I don't think that's the point.

END OF SCENE

□—————□

SCENE; Rabawaba

*A short while later. A small Parisian
bistro, Chez Toto*

*DUKE, ROSALITA, SHOE JACK and
RAMBLER are seated at a table.*

DUKE You know you're in trouble when the newspaper you're reading starts talking to you.

*DUKE sighs and puts down his
newspaper.*

DUKE I've lost control of the technology already.

ROSALITA You poor thing.

DUKE No matter.

CHORUS (singing) The Captain sends his regrets
The Captain sends his regrets.

SHOE JACK Pity that.

ROSALITA is addressing an envelope.

ROSALITA Is this 'three' clear?

RAMBLER It looks more like an 'eight'.

ROSALITA studies her handiwork.

ROSALITA I put the comma in the wrong place.

DUKE Don't just cross it out.

ROSALITA Too late.

ROSALITA laughs.

DUKE Ach....

SHOE JACK I had a nice chat with JJ today.

DUKE JJ?

SHOE JACK You know JJ. That tunnel project....

DUKE O.... yes.... JJ. How did he sound?

SHOE JACK Fine. Charming. You know: JJ. A good friend of the Captain too.

DUKE *(to RAMBLER)*What are you doing now?

RAMBLER is rubbing his nose.

RAMBLER Nose callisthenics - I've got to work my nose more. See? Push the tip up and down, side to side. Its important you do both directions for balance. See?

DUKE Don't touch my nose.

RAMBLER No no, try it.

They all do nose callisthenics.

TOTO comes to the table.

TOTO To drink? When, of course, you have finished your callisthenics.

DUKE I'll have a Calvados.

TOTO Calvados for the monsieur....

DUKE Calvados all round.

TOTO Oui, monsieur. And perhaps a book while you wait?....

TOTO has a wagon, filled with books.

SHOE JACK touches a few books.

SHOE JACK No thanks, but I will take a menu.

DUKE Menus all round.

TOTO Of course, monsieur...

TOTO sets off.

ROSALITA (to RAMBLER) I thought you said he was crazy. He doesn't seem crazy.

RAMBLER O those are the worst type. He's crazy, believe me, he's soooooo crazy.

ROSALITA is finishing the envelope.

SHOE JACK (to ROSALITA) Who's it to?

ROSALITA Someone named Herr Gunter.

SHOE JACK Who's that?

DUKE I don't know anyone named Herr Gunter.

ROSALITA Its not your letter.

RAMBLER (to DUKE) A friend of the Captain's.

DUKE O?

BRANDO enters, gasping.

BRANDO There. There. See, there. That big black cloud does seem large. doesn't it? As suddenly it crashes into the house on the hill. Not a cloud at all it turns out - funny that - its a big furry fir tree and its fallen right over. Wow.

BRANDO spies the book wagon.

BRANDO Books - I love books.

BRANDO takes a book.

BRANDO The Book of Fruit. Will the Captain option the rights?

RAMBLER Leave the Captain out of this.

ROSALITA Poor man. Dear O dear.

SHOE JACK Is this actually about fruit or just a really good title.

BRANDO Rabawaba rabawaba rabawaba rabawaba; now that was a good title.

No response.

BRANDO Come on come on - rabawaba me winkie. Rabawaba me winkie? Don't you remember? Come on....

DUKE It seems vaguely familiar.

SHOE JACK And easyish on the tongue - like riding a bike.

ROSALITA You've never been on a bike in your life.

SHOE JACK O?

END OF SCENE



SCENE; Berlin to Hanoi

Time, ten years ago.

*DUKE, ROSALITA, CRUEL and
HAPPY on a train.*

DUKE Another day, another train.

HAPPY Berlin Hanoi, Berlin Hanoi - how can that only take two nights. Two nights?
How? How? It doesn't make sense.

CRUEL Shut up.

HAPPY You shut up.

ROSALITA Shut up, Happy.

CRUEL Ya, shut up.

HAPPY I'll show you shut up.

HAPPY pulls a gun.

ALL No guns, Happy.

HAPPY reluctantly puts away the gun.

ROSALITA We should have upgraded to first class.

DUKE Can't afford it - thousands.

ROSALITA sighs.

ROSALITA Did you see the bathroom we have to use? Disgusting.

CHORUS *(singing)* Disgusting

ROSALITA Sleeping with strangers in a large room

CRUEL We're all here now, boy.

HAPPY Did you notice? This train has a funny shape.

CRUEL What what?

HAPPY Well look at this - its wide at one end and pointy at the other. Trains used to be straight and narrow when I was young.

DUKE Like a pencil?

HAPPY More like a pencil box.

ROSALITA I had a lovely pencil box when I was young. I loved it so. Little blue flowers on it. I don't get what you mean.

HAPPY Like in the movies.

DUKE The movies?

HAPPY Trains in the movies.

DUKE Now I'm confused.

HAPPY There were always trains in the movies. Like.... like.... Bogart when they're looking for gold.

DUKE On the train?

HAPPY No. They take the train to get to the gold.

DUKE That's convenient.

HAPPY And then the bandits attack.

ROSALITA O O - the bandit with the white hat.

CHORUS (*singing*) White hat....

HAPPY That's right. A white hat and a white horse.

CHORUS (*singing*) White horse.

ROSALITA (*to CHORUS*) O stop it. Please please stop it.

CHORUS (*whispering*) White horse.

ROSALITA I don't remember the white horse.

CRUEL A white hat seems an unlikely choice.

HAPPY Why?

CRUEL A dirty world - hard to keep clean.

DUKE is rummaging in a large suitcase.

DUKE Where are my shoes?

ROSALITA What shoes?

DUKE I brought three pairs with me. Those white runners.

CRUEL Hard to keep clean.

DUKE And a heavy pair of black boots. And?... the runners, the boots... the runners, the boots... O I know - my nice soft black Italian shoes - from Sienna they were. Where are they? Where are my lovely shoes?

CRUEL Maybe they're at our hotel? Logical, no?

DUKE We're on a train... we have no hotel.

ROSALITA Or maybe they're here...

*ROSALITA pulls a pair of white shoes
out of her pocket.*

DUKE I'm truly grateful, my dear. Truly grateful.

DUKE turns to the audience.

DUKE (*to AUDIENCE*) I never find the other pairs.

END OF SCENE



SCENE; On a train in Norway

Time, ten years ago.

BRANDO and REAL BRANDO are seated in a train compartment.

Roaring past a town.

BRANDO Is that Oslo?

REAL BRANDO Its wherever you want it to be, slim.

BRANDO I need to get off at Oslo. Oslo for me, boy O boy. You seem familiar.

REAL BRANDO Do I? How so?

BRANDO That's a good question.

REAL BRANDO Is it because you look just like me, slim?

BRANDO Do I? How horrifying.

REAL BRANDO laughs.

REAL BRANDO My name's Marlon, how de do?

BRANDO Marlon? Marlon? That's amazing.

REAL BRANDO Is it?

BRANDO My name's Marlon too - that's scary, that's really scary.

REAL BRANDO Its only the start. That man over there....

BRANDO Which one?

REAL BRANDO There's only the one, slim.

BRANDO O? Is his name Marlon too?

REAL BRANDO Ha. He's wondering...

BRANDO You can read minds?

REAL BRANDO Since forever. Its a gift, I tell you.

BRANDO That man?....

REAL BRANDO O yes, he's wondering if he put too much garlic in the Bolognese sauce for supper.

REAL BRANDO sniffs.

REAL BRANDO Yes, my dear sir, you certainly did. After he eats, somehow the power goes off. The grid is down. He's in the basement. Its cavernous. And so many large horse sculptures - how did they get them down here? Did they build the house around them?

BRANDO That's a real possibility.

REAL BRANDO Is that what you think, slim?

BRANDO Maybe.

REAL BRANDO And so many switches. Ah, at last - some of the power is suddenly back. Where's the breakers now we can see. Strange - not breakers but a fusebox. And strange looking things they are these fuses. He'll have to get some more somewhere. He must make a list. Excuse me, slim, you're not paying attention.

BRANDO I'm so lonely.

REAL BRANDO Acres and acres of it?

BRANDO Yes, like that.

REAL BRANDO You poor dear pilgrim.

END OF SCENE



SCENE; Formosus

Time, ten years ago.

*DUKE, ROSALITA, CRUEL and
HAPPY in a rather large compartment
on a fast moving train.*

ROSALITA The light is so clear today.

*CRUEL is doing calligraphy. DUKE
looks at it.*

DUKE What do we have? What do we have?

CRUEL This one means: wu.

DUKE Wu? What?

CRUEL Nothingness.

DUKE Ah.

CRUEL The Japanese have four hundred words for nothingness.

HAPPY That many.

CRUEL It seems necessary

ROSALITA To them?

CRUEL Yes.

DUKE We have ten thousand words for: nothing much. So I guess I understand. No
wit intended.

CRUEL No wit taken

ROSALITA Dear O dear.

CRUEL looks into HAPPY's eyes.

CRUEL I can see what you're going to say.

DUKE You mean - what do you mean?

HAPPY scoffs.

HAPPY I doubt it.

CRUEL I can see your dialogue written right there. First it says you glance up...

HAPPY glances up.

CRUEL Then you say: O my God.

HAPPY O my God.

CRUEL turns to see the GHOST OF FORMOSUS.

CRUEL O my God.

A scary moment. Suppressed shrieks.

DUKE What's this what's this? Who are you?

GHOST OF FORMOSUS I am Formosus.

HAPPY Do you have treasure?

GHOST OF FORMOSUS Perhaps. A thousand years ago I was pope of the Holy See. Thus I had many bitter and relentless foes. I chose Arnulf, king of the Franks as my Holy Emperor. But the Duke of Ravenna - Lambert - would have this for himself. Arnulf protected me but soon died. A pity. I was then taken to a dark dank prison. Lambert cut off my nose and ears. See.

DUKE O my God - he has no nose.

GHOST OF FORMOSUS I died in that stinking place. They dragged my body through the streets, dumped it in the river.

HAPPY Is that it?

GHOST OF FORMOSUS Wait, wait - there is more, there is treasure to come. Boniface succeeded me. He died in a fortnight of gout. His successor, Stephen, mad, found my rotting corpse. He dressed me in my papal robes, and placed me on the throne. I was charged with heresy. A child deacon was made to answer for me. (*imitates the child deacon*) He is chattering, terrified to behold and thus says what was expected. (*normal*) After being found guilty, I was condemned - a perjurer, a usurper of the throne. I was stripped of all again but the hair shirt clinging to my withered rotting flesh, and dumped back into the Tiber. I drifted downstream, where I was recovered by my followers and given a quiet yet dignified burial.

HAPPY Is that it?

GHOST OF FORMOSUS Wait, wait - there is more, there is treasure to come. Pope Stephen - I await him at the gates of hell - made all the clergy dance on my grave. The people of Rome had loved me and rose against Stephen and strangled him.

HAPPY Is that it?

GHOST OF FORMOSUS Wait, wait - there is more, there is treasure to come. Popes followed - one upon another. Romanus ruled for four months. Theodore ruled for two weeks. John ruled for two years. Benedict ruled for three years and two months. Leo ruled for five months. His successor Sergius - I spit on his memory - strangled Leo and took the papal thrown. Once more they exhumed my body, now ten years dead, and condemned me yet again. To hell with them. To hell with them all. I await them at the gates. Again my rotting body was again thrown into the Tiber.

HAPPY Is that it?

GHOST OF FORMOSUS Wait, wait - there is more, there is treasure to come.

*RAMBLER enters the compartment.
The GHOST OF FORMOSUS points at
him.*

HAPPY Does he have the treasure?

GHOST OF FORMOSUS Not him. Not him.

RAMBLER I do so have treasure. Its inside me - the true and lovely nature of my soul.

GHOST OF FORMOSUS Ignore him. The treasure is with me, only with me.

RAMBLER Where?

CRUEL Close the door.

RAMBLER Shut up.

HAPPY Hey you shut up.

RAMBLER Hey you shut up.

HAPPY Shut up.

GHOST OF FORMOSUS I'm talking now.

RAMBLER Hey, stay out of this.

RAMBLER kicks the GHOST OF FORMOSUS.

GHOST OF FORMOSUS No treasure for you.

The GHOST OF FORMOSUS disappears.

HAPPY O you're done, boy. He was going to tell us where the treasure was. You're done and toast.

HAPPY pulls a gun.

ALL No guns, Happy.

HAPPY reluctantly puts away the gun.

DUKE *(to RAMBLER)* Sit down - you're making me dizzy.

RAMBLER What was all that? Hey, its cold in here - has someone died?

DUKE The door won't close - simple as that.

ROSALITA Use a chair.

RAMBLER My chair?

ROSALITA Jam it closed.

CRUEL I tried that - it didn't work. And now a cold wind, a cold wind blows through all the time.

ROSALITA The ghost talked in paragraphs. Did you notice? I didn't know they could do that

END OF SCENE



SCENE; The interview

DD is staring out the window. Its raining. A cold November Vancouver rain.

DD To brood perchance to dream.

A knock at the door. DD ignores it; his brooding is too compelling. Another knock. DD continues to ignore the request.

The door opens; HAPPY enters.

HAPPY Ah, excuse me - I'm here for the interview.

DD sighs.

HAPPY Am I disturbing you?

DD No no, you're expected. I was told you'd have questions for me.

HAPPY What were you doing?

DD That's a question. Brooding. I do masses of brooding. A window is useful and conducive....

HAPPY To brooding?

DD Yes, exactly.

HAPPY May I ask, what were you brooding about?

DD Hard to say.

HAPPY Something along the lines of perhaps: we don't ever really know what is happening. We think we do, we're lulled into believing we do, we delude ourselves into believing we do. Or words to that effect. But we know nothing.

DD What?

DD laughs.

DD They used to believe in a substance - not five hundred years ago - the texture of the universe itself, which they called: ether. Brooding is simply about adjusting yourself to the ether.

HAPPY Or is it?

DD Ha. The metaphors of plot are mere entertainments. Like our lives - passions, wisdoms and idiocies. And all our yesterdays have lighted fools the way to dusty death. Shake and bake.

HAPPY I like that.

DD I thought you might.

HAPPY Do you now?

DD I do. Good words those. I like words.

HAPPY What?

DD That's a word.

HAPPY You're a berk.

DD That's three words.

HAPPY A full-fledged nutter.

DD Hmmmmm? Nutters and berks - seemingly an important distinction in the mind of a playwright where there is so little else - so it often seems - than morbid plot devices and dreams of opening night glories.

HAPPY That's not an answer. That's not even close to an answer. I've got questions - I want answers. For instance: where am I?

DD What?

HAPPY I was in all the scenes set ten years ago and now where am I? Nowhere, that's where. And where's me mate, Cruel? Where's Cruel?

HAPPY: a small sob.

DD I'm not getting this. I thought George and Martha were in this play. Or maybe it should be the next one?...

HAPPY I don't care. I'm not getting this and I'm not liking it either.

DD Is that like the ether?

HAPPY: a bark of a laugh.

HAPPY I'm Happy, you berk.

DD You don't seem happy.

HAPPY Happy.

DD O wait a minute. Wait.... O yes. Yes.... Happy.

HAPPY Happy.

DD I thought you seemed familiar.

HAPPY Aren't I now.

DD On the other hand, the curse of the human race.

HAPPY Me?

DD No, familiarity.

HAPPY You know where you can put your familiarity? I got questions and you don't have any answers worth shite.

HAPPY pulls a gun.

HAPPY I want answers.

DD Alright alright. Relax. Don't shoot. Take a deep breath instead. Relax relax. Answers are all about words. When they aren't about bread and love. Would you first mind putting that gun down?

HAPPY Not a gun - its a pistol. And you didn't use the right words.

*PAUSE, while DD ponders this
obscurity.*

*Impatient, HAPPY fires a shot over DD's
left shoulder.*

DD Hey. Stop that. Someone could get hurt. Me, for instance.

HAPPY I want words. Answer words. And I must tell you I'm not feeling very kindly.

DD Or happy... ha. Dear O dear O dear.

*HAPPY fires three shots into the ceiling;
plaster falls - a cloud of white dust.*

DD Alright. You want answers? I've got words - nothing but words. Will that do? Will that bloody well do? Mark. Mark. Mark mark mark. Words marks words marks words marks words mark mark mark mark. Boundaries, landmarks, limits. Stone as a memorial. A banner. The pit of the stomach. Persons easily deceived. Or decent; he pays his men their wages without delay. Thy sad tear-scrawl'd letter, a mark to the storm. The quick touch. It cannot, I believe, be far wide from the mark. Tokens and signs. She bestows a Mark of her Favour upon every one of them. A vestige a trace, a trademark. One of them, as it is said, had the Thieves mark on her hand. The Mark of the Beast. Impending doom. Full marks for the somewhat deadly opening sentence. Whether he himself might not have made his mark in politics is perhaps a futile speculation. Marking time. The motherly tea-pot sending up its cloud of vapor from the midst - Heaven bless the mark mark mark mark!

DD turns to HAPPY.

DD Are those enough bloody words? Do you have enough answers now? Put down that bloody gun?

END OF SCENE



SCENE; Driving in Sicilia

Time, the present. A week or two after Paris.

A car in the Sicilian countryside. Hilly. A narrow twisty road. The sound of sheep bells. A distant view of water.

ROSALITA is driving. DUKE in the front seat as well. The occasional snort from the sleeping SHOE JACK in the backseat.

ROSALITA Why so glum chum?

DUKE Was I? I mostly feel carsick.

CHORUS (*singing*) Carsick.

DUKE Up and down and up and down. Sicily's like a roller coaster.

DUKE points at the landscape.

DUKE What's that?

ROSALITA Olive trees.

DUKE What's that?

ROSALITA Orange trees

DUKE What's that?

ROSALITA Lemon trees.

DUKE What's that?

ROSALITA Tomato trees

DUKE What's that?

ROSALITA Cabbage trees.

DUKE All they have here is food. I miss the trains. (*singing*) I will not languish. I will not laaaaaangguish. (*spoken*) There's always new people - everywhere I look there's new people.... and I don't know them.

ROSALITA Which is the break pedal again?

We see MARTHA and GEORGE by the side of the road, hitchhiking.

MARTHA & GEORGE (*shouting*) Give us a lift. We need a lift. Palermo, we need to get to Palermo.

DUKE Maybe we should give them a lift?

SHOE JACK wakes up with a start.

SHOE JACK No way, boys. Not those shirkers.

SHOE JACK sticks his head out the window.

SHOE JACK (*shouting*) No droolers and out of tuners in this car.

MARTHA & GEORGE (*shouting*) Palermo.... Palermo. We're in the next play....

SHOE JACK That was close. You never know when the Angel of Death is going to plow up your garden.

DUKE That reminds me - they found a new disease.

ROSALITA Dear O dear.

DUKE Heartgohighhigh.

ROSALITA Heartgohighhigh?

DUKE The symptoms are obscure.

SHOE JACK Is that the same thing as being rendered obscure. And is Airgohighhigh a sister disease?

DUKE Ronny - the German guy - has it.

ROSALITA Not Herr Gunter?

DUKE No, another one.

SHOE JACK Airgohighhigh?

DUKE No, Heartgohighhigh.

SHOE JACK sighs.

SHOE JACK Regret. Nothing but regret. What I thought I would do. Books I would read. War and Peace. Books I would write. Languages I would learn. Its like being on the beach. A sailing ship in the distance. I wave. Hey, I'll come, I'm in, take me. The wind blows the words out of my mouth. I'm just an idiot on the beach jumping and I daresay foaming and nobody hears me. Or cares that they can't. It'll never be as good again. O I'm sorry, was I speaking out loud?

DUKE Do you mind? I'm carsick.

CHORUS (*singing*) Carsick.

ROSALITA rolls her eyes.

SHOE JACK Let's have a salad

ROSALITA But there's no bowl....

SHOE JACK Well, then I'll use my hat.

SHOE JACK takes his hat and mixes the salad greens and the vinaigrette in it; with his hands.

ROSALITA is appalled.

ROSALITA I'm not that hungry, really....

DUKE I think my Heartgohighhigh is acting up.

END OF SCENE

SCENE; Real Brando rides again

Time, ten years from now.

DUKE, ROSALITA and SHOE JACK are strolling in Victoria Park, Kitchener.

BRANDO and REAL BRANDO are on the other side of the park. DUKE peers at them, curious and confused.

DUKE Who is it?

SHOE JACK I want coffee.

ROSALITA Let's all have coffee.

CHORUS *(singing)* Coffee coffee coffee coffee.

DUKE I hate coffee.

ROSALITA Duke, come, coffee.

DUKE Yes, my dear.

DUKE, ROSALITA and SHOE JACK turn to exit the park.

DUKE *(off)* Who is it?

BRANDO *(to REAL BRANDO)* You do seem familiar.

REAL BRANDO laughs.

REAL BRANDO The curse of the human race, slim.

BRANDO Either that, or run away and join the circus. I could've been in the business - singing and dancing to beat the band. But I am not interested.

REAL BRANDO shrugs.

BRANDO What would I do anyway? Have tea with the animals is the reply. Tea with the animals? Absurd.

REAL BRANDO Leopards?

BRANDO Leopards?

REAL BRANDO What if one escaped?

BRANDO O? What if one did? Or consider an elephant holding a teacup. Better an elephant in a teacup. Airtight then is their reply - go with the hedgehog. Ha.

REAL BRANDO Slim, it seems just like my life.

They laugh.

REAL BRANDO The swell of the music as the movie ends? I can't look - I used to hate riding horses. Big scary hairy beasts.

A movie is being shown.

CHORUS (*singing*) Rabawaba rabawaba rabawaba rabawaba.

BRANDO I can't open my eyes, can you? The projector is just too bright.

END OF SCENE



SCENE; Old

Time, ten years from now.

*ROSALITA and CRUEL are listening to
the CHORUS.*

HAPPY lurks in the corner.

A dead DUKE rests in his coffin.

CHORUS (*singing*) Stupid time with Gunter
Stupid time all night long.
Stupid time with Gunter
Stupid time all night long.

*Moved, ROSALITA and CRUEL
applaud. Tears are wiped away.*

CRUEL Quite good, don't you think?

ROSALITA Yes, good. Very sweet.

ROSALITA turns to HAPPY.

ROSALITA (*to HAPPY*) Good?

No response from HAPPY.

ROSALITA Dear O dear.

CRUEL O ignore him. There's the ticket.

ROSALITA I don't travel.

CHORUS (*singing*) On the rue de Rivoli
On the rue de Rivoli.

CRUEL You used to.

ROSALITA Did I? It all seems a blur.

CRUEL We all did.

HAPPY What?

ROSALITA Travel.

HAPPY Now we're too old. Too too old.

CHORUS (*singing*) Too too old.

CRUEL Poppycock.

ROSALITA I'm a hundred and nine if I'm a day.

*HAPPY is stuffing his mouth with
carrots and parsnips.*

HAPPY That's old.

CRUEL (*to ROSALITA*) You're sixty-two and maybe not even that.

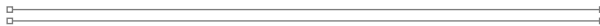
ROSALITA Am I? Its so easy to forget. The truth is: I've never been quite the same since I had my gall bladder out.

CRUEL That's it then. Boy, do I understand. It all changes. Me, I'm not even so cruel anymore.

A quiet chuckle is enjoyed.

*A grotesque gagging choking sound from
HAPPY; CRUEL and ROSALITA turn to
look at him.*

END OF PLAY



Elmira, 07 June 2006

ARTIST STATEMENT Don Druick

As a playwright, my principle artistic practice is the writing of plays. My settings are varied; both contemporary and historical. I also translate plays from both French and Italian. As well, I have written opera libretti and radio drama.

I love the limitation of the stage. I love the magic of words. I love the collaboration inherent in the theatre world. As a playwright, my job is primarily to provide both narrative and dialogue material to actors - to provide a context for their artform. What actors do is more than half the final experience. For example, actor Richard McMillan in 2003 won the Dora Mavor Moore award for his performance in my one-man play, THROUGH THE EYES.

The themes of my plays are varied but can be loosely grouped:

- Individuals and their relationships to the social institutions which define their world.
- The artistic voice and its relationship to political power.
- The collective madness of society. War, greed, unkindnesses.
- The mystery of love.

I am always interested in genre theory and in the structural formulation of narrative. MARK; MY WORDS is the natural continuation of these ongoing preoccupations.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Don Druick is an award-winning playwright, a baroque flautist, and an avid herb gardener. His plays have been produced on stage and radio throughout Canada, and in Europe, Japan, and the USA.

Recent commissions include: *LIZZIE STRATAS* (Grand Theatre); *RECIPE FOR MURDER* (CBC); *MONSIEUR MOLIERE'S FRENCH SCENES* (Theatre & Company); *THE FROZEN DEEP* (Nightswimming Theatre); *BLUE HANDS*, a translation of Larry Tremblay's *LES MAINS BLEUES* (Centre des Auteurs dramatiques); and *TULIP* (Nightswimming Theatre).

In 1989, his play, *WHERE IS KABUKI?*, was nominated for a Dora Mavor Moore award as Outstanding New Play; and in 1991, was shortlisted for the Governor General's Award for Drama. In 1997, *WHERE IS KABUKI?* was the recipient of a Chalmers Canadian Play Award. In 2001, he received the Kitchener Waterloo Arts Awards in Literature. In 2005, his play *THROUGH THE EYES*, was shortlisted for the Governor General's Award for Drama.

Having lived in Vancouver and Montréal, Don Druick currently lives with artist Jane Buyers in Elmira Ontario, a small village 125 km west of Toronto.



MARK; MY WORDS

A Play Text by Don Druick

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