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Dramatic Publishing

BOID & OSKAR

A Play

by

ELIZABETH WONG



Dramatic Publishing

Woodstock, Illinois • England • Australia • New Zealand

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(BOID & OSKAR)

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BOID & OSKAR

A Play in One Act

For 2m., 2w., plus many m. and f. ensemble roles.

May be done with 3m. and 3w. with doubling.

Multicultural cast suggested.

CHARACTERS

PRINCE OSKAR, a red classic convertible

BOID, a migrating swallow

CHORUS, 4 actors playing multiple roles, including

A FLOCK OF SWALLOWS

TOWNSPEOPLE, including

MAN IN RAGS, a homeless person, and

WOMAN IN RAGS, also homeless

THE SUIT, an authority figure

LILY, the water flower

SOCCER GIRL, including her

MIRROR IMAGE, and her

MOTHER

BAND OF HUNGRY CATS, including

CRUSHER, an abandoned kitty

WINTER, a harsh storm with an entourage of

WIND, HAIL and SNOW

TIME: At the cusp of winter.

PLACE: EveryTown, USA.

PLAYWRIGHT'S NOTE: Prince Oskar is modeled after a 1956 SR-2 Corvette convertible. His parts should be easily detached and can be as simple as a chalkboard/plexiglass cutout with erasability or colorforms that can be peeled off. The color palette of the Chorus should greatly contrast the colors of Boid and Oskar. Think Magritte! Use Peruvian music when appropriate and at end of play.

BOID & OSKAR was originally commissioned and produced by artistic director Ed Stern and Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park, through a generous grant from Lazarus Fund of the Federated Department Stores Foundation for the playhouse's Skilken/Brown Touring Co., March 13 through April 7, 2001. Bert Goldstein, director of education outreach, directed the play. The original cast was: Steve Cirbus, Manon Halliburton, Erik Melver, Dyland Shelton, Heather Smith and Shelly Sproles. The costume designer was Melanie Mortimer, set designer was Rob Korharchik and sound designer was Jef Brown. Linda Reiff was the choreographer.

BOID & OSKAR

A FLOCK OF SWALLOWS take flight. They fly in formation low in the sky, occasionally amid the clouds.

FLOCK OF SWALLOWS. Cruising. Circling. Hovering. Vectoring! Floating in the sky! Cruising. Circling. Hovering. Vectoring! Soaring in the sky!

SWALLOW #1. Right flank right! Dip!

FLOCK OF SWALLOWS. Dip!

SWALLOW #1. Left flank left! Dip!

FLOCK OF SWALLOWS. Dip! We're flying! (*Alternating.*) High above an ugly city! Over smokestacks! Down dark streets! Over towers of steel. And concrete. And brick. And mean people throwing—rocks!

SWALLOW #1. Watch out! Rock!

FLOCK OF SWALLOWS. Incoming, sideswipe!

SWALLOW #2. Why do humans throw rocks?

FLOCK OF SWALLOWS. Because we're beautiful! Because we can *fly*!

SWALLOW #1. Watch out, incoming! You, down there! Stop throwing rocks!

SWALLOW #2. Boid better get here soon. We can't wait all day. It's too dangerous. Where is that Boid anyway?

FLOCK OF SWALLOWS (*echoing, as if from far to near*). Where is Boid? Where is Boid? Where is Boid?

SWALLOW #3 (*a really fast-talker*). Who does Boid think he is? Making all his friends wait like he's all that! I don't care if he's the best navigator we have. Winter is coming. I'm not going to freeze my cute birdie buns no way!

FLOCK OF SWALLOWS. Winter is coming. If we don't go now, we'll all freeze.

SWALLOW #2. Winter is coming. I feel the need to MIGRATE!

FLOCK OF SWALLOWS. Time to migrate!

SWALLOW #4. No, we should wait for Boid. He has the sharpest beak.

SWALLOW #3. And he knows the way!

SWALLOW #4. We need him to tell us jokes, and make us laugh. It's a very long way to Machu Picchu.

SWALLOW #1 (*sotto voce, mysteriously*). Arequipa, Cuzco, Cochabamba, Lima, Peru. Arequipa, Cuzco, Lima, Peru, Machu Picchu!

(*One by one, SWALLOWS join in.*)

SWALLOW #4. I know Boid is selfish, but he's one of us. We should wait for him.

FLOCK OF SWALLOWS. Let's go! Let's go! Let's go! Arequipa! Cuzco! Lima, Peru! Machu Picchu!

SWALLOW #3 (*fast-talking*). There'll be señoritas and warm summer breezes and the food! Sweet papayas slimy wiggly bugs con salsa! Muy bueno!

SWALLOW #1. There's Boid! Down by the lake. Boid, that lake is filthy! It's full of foam and oil and yucky stuff. Come on, Boid! Shake yer tail! Let's migrate!

SWALLOW #4. Come on, Boid! Let's migrate!

SWALLOW #3. She ain't worth it, Boid! Come on!

SWALLOW #1. Stop yer yappin', and start yer flappin'.
I'll take his place. (*Flies to the 'v' apex.*) Come on,
let's go!

FLOCK OF SWALLOWS. Santiago, La Paz, Cochabamba,
let's go! Cartagena, Baranquilla, Bogota, let's go. Buenos Aires, Lake Titicaca, let's go! Andale! Andale!
Vamanose! Va man ose!

(The SWALLOWS exit, with a flourish. They become the CHORUS.

BOID, the swallow with WATER LILY, a beautiful water flower, down below, by a lake at the cusp of winter. BOID does a mating dance, perches next to LILY.)

BOID. I'm dancing for you. Only for you! Just for you, my Lily! Dancing to the music of the trees, along this bubbly bank. The music of amore. The swish swish of luvvv.

CHORUS. Swish, swish. Gurgle. Swish, swish. Ripple. Bubble!

WATER LILY. Boid, you birdbrain! They left without you! Winter is nearly here. You're going to freeze. You'll get all stiff, your beak will break in two. It won't be pretty.

BOID. I don't care. I'll catch up. Lily, I love you!

LILY. Hello? I am a plant. Veg-e-tation. See: stem, leaves, petals, roots. You are a bird, more precisely, a swallow. And swallows have to migrate, or else, birdie popsicle. Like this: (*She demonstrates fowl-like rigor mortis.*)

BOID. Hah! I'm indestructible! Oh, my water lily. You love my strut. My cocky walk. You love the way I puff my feathers. You love my ardent lover's song. When I

wag my tail, oh, Lily, I do insist! You must not, cannot, shall not resist! (*Wiggles his behind.*) Nice, uh?

LILY. Get lost, Tweety! Please, Boid. Soon, the lake will freeze over. The snow will fall. Soon, my pads will fall off, I'll get brown, shriveled, next year's *mulch*...

BOID. *Smooch*. How's about a little smooch, Lily, my Lily?

LILY. You never listen, Boid. You selfish thing. Forget about me. Your friends needed you, and you abandoned them.

BOID. They know the way to Machu Picchu. Just go thataway. Over there, around the bend, over a hill, past the big red barn, across a little ocean, and a few big land masses. Oh, Lily, notice the creaminess of my secondary feathers. I'm quite a catch, Lily, my lily pad, sweet Lily. Swish, swish, wiggle.

CHORUS. Swish, swish. Ripple! Bubble!

LILY. Leave now, you nitwit! Migrate while you still can.

BOID. Pffffeh. Migration, schmi-gration! I do it every year, but love comes around only once, or twice, okay maybe three four five times. Lily, I love you. My beak speaks truly. Now, what are you going to give me, hm?

LILY. Oh, Boid, you understand nothing. Let me make it clearer. BUZZ OFF!!!

BOID. Until I steal a kiss, I'll never rest. In the rippled, dappled sunlight you are beautiful. She's dumber than a cat, but I don't care. Oh. Look at my reflection. I do look goooooood.

LILY. You are wasting your time! You only love me because I don't like you. Goodbye!

BOID. You know, I delayed my migration because of you. You'd let me go, without even a kiss adios? Lily, I say to you now, know this: I will never EVER love again. EVER! I hope you are satisfied. I go now. I'm leaving.

Anything could happen. Some terrible tragedy. You might never see me again. (*BOID sighs.*) I'm gone. (*He leaves.*)
LILY. Goodbye, Boid. I will miss you.

(*At the factory. TOWNSPEOPLE work on the assembly line.*)

TOWNSPEOPLE. Work, work, work. Drudgery! Work, work, work. Sweat! All day, we work in the factory. We work overtime too! Everyone who lives in this town, trudges to work. (*Alternately.*) I missed my son's piano recital. I missed my daughter's soccer game. I missed my boy's bar mitzvah. I missed my girl's birthday. (*ALL.*) But today, the bigwig boss in the big fancy suit promised us—a surprise!

TOWNSPERSON #1. So up the hill we go.

(*On a hill above a city. TOWNSPEOPLE with umbrellas trudge up the hill, gather around a large mysterious object, hidden underneath a shimmering golden canvas.*)

TOWNSPERSON #2. Whew! That was steep, and muddy, but the view! I see the whole city from up here!

TOWNSPEOPLE. Look at the dark brooding sky. Looks like rain, but we don't care. Let it sprinkle, let it pour, today's the day we've long waited for! We're so...

TOWNSPERSON #1 (*overlapping*). ...excited and thrilled!

TOWNSPERSON #2. ...thrilled and exhilarated!

TOWNSPERSON #3. ...exhilarated and (*aside*) beside myself with anticipation!

TOWNSPEOPLE. There it is!!! We want to see what's underneath! We're told whatever it is, will make us happy.

We're told whatever it is, will make us feel good. The Suit will know. Where's The Suit? He knows everything. The Suit will tell us. There he is! What's under this shimmering blanket of gold. We can't wait to see. (ALL.) What's underneath?!!!!

(The TOWNSPEOPLE turn to THE SUIT, a very important person, dressed in an overweeningly large business suit.)

TOWNSPEOPLE. Tell us!

THE SUIT. Ladies and gentlemen! Workers and employees! People of this fair city! This is an exciting, exhilarating day for us all. Blahblah/yaddayadda/etcetera. We in management and in city hall, welcome you to this momentous occasion, of gigantic proportions. We welcome you to—The Unveiling! Come! Come closer, much closer, okay not that close. Gather 'round, uh, step back.

(BOID CRASH-lands.)

BOID. Ouch, my beak! So, what's going on?

TOWNSPEOPLE. Shhhhh!

THE SUIT. People! Thank you for blahblahblah/yaddayadda/etcetera/and so forth. You are the backbone of the economy. You make America go go go! *(Aside.)* You don't know it yet, but the factory will layoff several thousand of you, in a move called downsizing. So to that glorious and time-honored tradition of blahblah/yaddayadda/etcetera/and so forth, I give you—a commemoration! A memorial. A monument. A testament—to you, the workers! Now, without further ado, for the moment you've all been waiting for... *(Fanfare TRUMPET*

sounds.) I give you, Prince Oskar. The car for the new millennium!

(The long golden cloth slowly, dramatically billows across the stage or skyward. We see a red classic American sports car, like an SR-2 1956 Corvette convertible, with arctic-white racing stripes, and gleaming silver grillwork. Inside the car, a flamboyantly dressed "Spirit of the Car"—PRINCE OSKAR.)

TOWNSPEOPLE. Ooooooooo. Ahhhhhh. Ooooooooooh.
(Hushed reverent tones.) Beautiful. Stunning. Glorious.
BOID. Wow, looks like a very large birdbath!

(ALL applaud.)

TOWNSPEOPLE. Such styling, so graceful. Look at it! So sculptural, curvaceous, sleek! Look at it! A masterpiece of ingenuity and engineering. Look at it! Look at it!
(ALL.) Mesmerizing.
BOID. And very shiny.

THE SUIT. Cars are our passion. Blahblah/yaddayadda/ etcetera, senseless babble, useless words, empty meanings, so forth and so on. Well, my friends, time to get back to work. When the factory shuts down at the end of the year, you'll have plenty of time for art appreciation. Now, I give you, Prince Oskar!!!

TOWNSPEOPLE. We love it! Long live Prince Oskar! The car for the new millennium! Long live Oskar! We will love it, *forever!*

(They leave, still admiring the car. THE SUIT sees BOID.)