

FAU SCHOOL OF THE ARTS

Dorothy F. Schmidt
College of Arts and Letters
Florida Atlantic University

THE DEPARTMENT OF
THEATRE
AND *dance*

Holy Ghosts

By Romulus Linney



February 13-22 | Studio One Theatre

DIRECTOR'S NOTE: JEAN-LOUIS BALDET

This play centers on our struggle with the reasoned need to balance religious tolerance and our reflexive intolerance toward "outsider groups" whose beliefs, perspectives, and values are markedly different from mainstream religions. To most of us these groups' rites and ceremonies often seem strange and threatening. Religion by its very nature, as a dedicated form of belief, allows for very little acceptance to embrace other forms. This is of immense importance to us as we attempt to understand our evermore fractured world. Daily, the headlines presented by CNN and other major news agencies are driven by peoples' inability to tolerate the beliefs of cultures and religious subcultures that are seen as foreign and also by the unimaginable acts justified by, "an absolutism sometimes driven by religious ideology". This is the underlying theme that "Holy Ghosts" seeks to address. What are the limits of tolerance?

I began my research and preparation for this play out of a need to understand what I thought was ritual behavior among an outlier group of a fundamentalist branch of Christianity, The Apostolic Trinitarian non-denominational churches that run under the name, "The Church of God With Signs Following". Little did I know at the time that this group and its story was potentially a metaphor for societies' greater struggle with intolerance. This play was first published in 1971 and yet over 40 years later similar events are portrayed in news stories in 2013 and 14. In 2013, National Geographic ran a reality television show that followed the events around a few of these churches. The central characters of their story were two ministers, one, Jamie Coots and Andrew Hamblin, each were ministers in different congregations that engaged in religious snake handling as a rite. Both had been bitten numerous times by poisonous snakes. In 2013, Jamie Coots, died of a snake bite

which he received during a church service. This was the fatal bite among many he had suffered over the years. He refused medical attention as is the practice in this church; counting on God's intervention as a sign. It is important to understand that the snake is not worshipped, which is a common misunderstanding, but the uses of snakes, poison, and fire are "tools" in the worship of God and Jesus, whom they feel is God manifested in the flesh. Their belief is seated in the literal interpretation of the Bible: Mark, chapter 16: verse 15-18. These verses clearly state, that "the signs that follow them that believe" are the handling of poisonous snakes and drinking of poison without harm, the speaking in tongues, the healing of the sick (by laying on of hands) and the casting out of demons. These five signs are absolute and this extreme ritual behavior is what sets these churches apart from other Christian denominations. There are well over 120 of these churches throughout the South and they predominate in the isolated Appalachian regions of Tennessee and Kentucky, but these churches exist as far south as Central Florida. The state of Tennessee has passed laws in an attempt to ban this dangerous practice with little effect, as these communities are so insular. It has once again become clear that deep seated belief cannot be changed or irradiated by legislation.

The cast of this production and I, while working on this fascinating subject, which falls somewhere between an episode on reality TV and the most profound statement of religious conviction, found our views on "belief" challenged daily.

The test of faith presented in this story became a test of our understanding of tolerance.

DOROTHY F. SCHMIDT COLLEGE OF ARTS AND LETTERS
SCHOOL OF THE ARTS - DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE AND DANCE

presents

Holy Ghosts

by Romulus Linney

Produced by special arrangement with Dramatists Play Service, Inc.

Directed by Jean-Louis Baldet

Scenic Design
Melina Oikonomou*

Costume Design
Tim Dial

Lighting Design
Thomas M. Shorrock

Technical Director
Thomas M. Shorrock

Stage Manager
A.J. Taylor++

Sound Designer
Melissa Fiorini+

Scene Shop Foreman
Chris Evans

Costume Shop Manager
Jessica Cowden

+Member of Alpha Psi Omega National Theatre Honor Society
++ Officer of FAU's Alpha Psi Omega National Theatre Honor Society

*M.F.A. Graduate Student

Holy Ghosts *by Romulus Linney*

CAST (in order of appearance)

Nancy Shedman.....	Kimberlee Connor*
Coleman Shedman.....	Jordon Armstrong*+
Rogers Canfield.....	Ross Frawley*
Obediah Buckhorn, Junior.....	Connor Padilla*
Virgil Tides.....	Joe Anarumo+
Orin Hart.....	Joey De La Rua++
Howard Rudd.....	Bradley Wells+
Lorena Cosburg.....	Emily Freeman*
Mrs. Wall.....	Madison Spear
Muriel Boggs.....	Nicole Pelini+
Billy Boggs.....	Chris Cooper+
Reverend Obediah Buckhorn, Senior.....	Doug Wetzel*+
Carl Specter.....	Jack Kelly++
Bonnie Bridge.....	Brianna Handy*
Cancer Man.....	Manny Zaldivar+

PLACE

A one-room wooden building in East Tennessee.

TIME

The present: an evening in early summer.

There will be one 10-minute intermission.

PRODUCTION STAFF

House Manager.....	Chris Evans
Scenic Artist.....	Melina Oikonomou*
Vocal Coach.....	Kathryn L. Johnston
Assistant Vocal Coach.....	Jenna Wyatt
Music Director.....	Lynn McNutt
Assistant Stage Manager.....	Bridget Parente+
Fight Choreographer.....	Samantha Kaufman
Fight Captain.....	Ross Frawley*
Properties Master.....	Randall Swinton+
Electricians.....	Alissa Kane+, Michael Weisburg
Light Board Operator.....	Christina Battaglia
Sound Board Operator.....	Tamsin Kindred
Properties Assistants.....	Samantha Kaufman*, Shannon Ouellette*+
Costuming Assistants.....	Kim Connor*, Emily Freeman*, Doug Wetzel*+
Scene Shop Assistants.....	Jordon Armstrong*+, Ross Frawley*, Brianna Handy*, Connor Padilla*
Publicity & Office Assistant.....	Clifton J. Adams*
Assistant Shop Managers.....	James Lanners+, Manny Zaldivar+
Photography.....	Kenneth Grzymala of KRG Photography
Publicity Staff.....	Bradley Wells+
Run Crew.....	Luke Lehner, Tiffany Mays
Properties Crew.....	Brianna Butler
Makeup Crew.....	Chase Kennedy+
Dresser.....	Melissa Martinez
Wardrobe.....	Cassandra Glenn, Laura Goetz
Ushers.....	Miranda Schumes, Erica McGriff, Ronald Williams, Devin Weinburg, Aimee Pauquette

*Member of Alpha Psi Omega Theatre National Honor Society

** Officer of FAU's Alpha Psi Omega Theatre National Honor Society

UPCOMING
PRODUCTIONS
SEASON 2014-15

**Repertory Dance Theatre
Ensemble, (RDTE)**
Directed by Clarence Brooks
February 27- 28

The Last Night of Ballyhoo
by Alfred Uhry
April 10-19

Dances We Dance
Directed by Clarence Brooks
April 24-25

For tickets, call
1-800-564-9539 or visit
www.fauevents.com

STUDIO TWO
PRODUCTIONS*

*(Sponsored by Alpha Psi Omega,
National Theatre Honor Society):*

The Insanity of Mary Girard
by Lanie Robertson
Directed by Holly Tatem
February 27, 28 at 7 pm
February 28 & March 1 at 2 pm

Miscast Cabaret
A gender-swap cabaret showcasing
students re-defining roles.
Friday, March 20 at 7 pm

Night of One-Acts
Directed by Kimberlee Connor
& Joey De La Rua
April 3 at 7 pm, April 4 at 2 & 7 pm,
April 5 at 2 pm

Theatre in the Park
A showcase of scenes, songs, and
silliness.
Wednesday, April 15 at 7 pm

*All Studio Two productions are free.
Reserve seats by emailing
faustudiotwo@gmail.com.

*All performances, artists, dates and times are subject to change.
Please call 561-297-3810 five working days in advance of event
if special accommodation of a disability is needed.*

SUPPORT THE School of the Arts

Memberships support areas of greatest need within FAU's School of the Arts, or they may be designated to an area of specific interest to the donor.

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| ☐ Scholar
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| ☐ Associate
(\$2,500 – \$4,999) | ☐ Fellow (\$250 – \$499) |
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| | ☐ Contributor (\$35 – \$99) |

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 ☐ Dean's Ambassador of the Arts (\$1,000 unrestricted gift to the Arts)

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☐ I understand that the value of any tickets for which I am eligible will be deducted from my contribution making the remainder a tax-deductible donation.

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Mail to: Laurie Carney, Development Officer, Dorothy F. Schmidt College of Arts and Letters, FAU,
777 Glades Road, Boca Raton, FL 33431 | 561-297-3606 | lcarney@fau.edu

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THE DEPARTMENT OF **THEATRE** AND *Dance*



Dorothy F. Schmidt
College of Arts and Letters
Heather Coltman, Dean

Department of Theatre and Dance Faculty and Staff

Thomas Atkins, Professor
Jean-Louis Baldet, Professor
Clarence Brooks, Associate Professor &
Director of Dance
Jessica Cowden, Costume Shop Manager
Danielle Jolie Dale, Adjunct Professor
Kathleen Davenport M.D., Health and Wellness
Tim Dial, Associate Professor
Chris Evans, Scene Shop Foreman
Susan Fuls, Courtesy Appointment
and Associate Dean of the Graduate College
Desmond Gallant, Associate Professor
and Department Chair
Kathryn L. Johnston, Assistant Professor
Den Kopani, Associate Professor
James R. McDonough, Jr., Theatre Manager
Lynn McNutt, Assistant Professor
Judith Page-Sarfati, Program Assistant
Crystal Patient, Adjunct Professor
Elizabeth Price, Adjunct Professor
Thomas M. Shorrock, Associate Professor
Jana Tift, Adjunct Professor
Scott Wells, Adjunct Professor
Jenna Wyatt, Adjunct Professor

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