

18 May 1989
Seattle

Dear Teri and Laura and Alan;

I just received a copy of Terry's letter dated May 11 in which she describes suggestions regarding revisions of GLORIA DUPLEX to Jamie. Reading the letter made me aware of how sad I am that things have gotten so mixed up for us and I'd like to respond and clarify a couple of things and see if the four of us can't climb out of this swamp of negativity that seems to have colored this creative endeavor that we're all about.

First of all, I remain deeply moved by the passion with which you all approach the play. It's unfortunate that my own time crunch with writing the ABC pilot seems to have dovetailed with our stressful pre-production time to create ill feelings about my involvement. I think I can imagine what you are feeling, Laura, from your phone message to me and your conversation with Burke Walker. But in spite what things may look like, I have no desire to punish or impede your work in any way at all and I surely don't want to hurt Gloria and Bud in this incarnation.

I want GLORIA DUPLEX to be the best production it can be. It's just that I thought you understood from the beginning that my coming to LA for a week of rehearsal and possibly working changes in the play was entirely subject to my availability. Our pre-production friction notwithstanding, I am up to my neck in the very new task of writing my first television pilot, and I simply don't have the time it would take for me to be at a week of rehearsals and carefully look at, consider, and make changes in the play. I'd never make order switches and the like without seeing them first; it wouldn't make sense.

I've tried to write to you each time I have received a phone call that required a response. Except for your call, Alan, which I didn't think asked for me to expressly respond. I know that writing may not be the same as a phone call, but it is easier for me to communicate in writing than on the phone.

As I wrote Terry a few weeks ago, I send all warm wishes for your

experience with GLORIA , but I can not have an active participation in the production. However, as for the specific questions you mentioned in the letter, I want to respond so that we are as clear as possible about our respective wishes.

So-- here goes:

1. Half hour of Cajun music at half hour. In the original production, Bill Shepard called these tunes out and the band followed with tunes they'd rehearsed during the music rehearsals. He could probably do the same there. I don't have a list of specific songs. Bill can suggest authentic Cajun numbers for the pre-show music.

2. Secondly, the song Terry mentioned that she felt would fit nicely: I appreciate the suggestion, but I can't make a change like that without being around to hear and see how it fits in.

3. Order change: ditto. I can understand that you feel very strongly about an order change, Terry, but I can't fathom it at this distance. I went through an awful lot of work to get the final order you have in the script, and I really do think the version I came up with in the end works the best.

4. Using material from earlier versions. This would be good stuff to use as subtext, but after working and re-working the play in several ways on stage, I decided that material works best not on stage, but in my head. Now you can have it in your head too, and I hope it helps.

5. Re: brief interchange between Rev. Mother and Gloria. Terry, if you'd just let me know what lines you're referring to here, I could understand this suggestion, and probably give it an okay. I just don't what interchange you mean. Want to call or drop me a line and let me know what lines, if it's still important.

6. Reversing the order of "Leaning on the Everlasting Arms" and Rev. Mother's first speech. YIKES! I promise you, from what I know about the play, it works a whole lot better to let her get everyone in the place singing before any speech begins. It works great and I don't think it's good to change this. The singing involves people from the top and sets a tone.

2

Just a few other things: as for Laura's comment that the theatre is turning down requests for interviews-- as I said, you guys are sharp producers and must have a reason. But if you're concerned about my speaking harshly against the production, believe me, I have about 10,000 other things that I would rather do in any press situation. I have no need to speak ill of anybody involved here-- we got off on the wrong foot, that's true, but it's professional differences of opinion, nothing personal. I am much more interested in talking about the world of The Kitten than I am anything else, and as I wrote to you the other day, I'm sure you'll do what's best for the play.

Also, I sent the program bio to you because your publicity director requested that I do so by May 12. I think the bio is in order, professionally, and is certainly called for in the program. As for the acknowledgements and Playwright Notes I sent with a suggestion to run in the program, you're right: you're under no contractual obligation to print them. I do think they add more texture to the program, though, and my reason for including them was to enrich the audience's entre into the exotic world of the play.

Thank you, Teri, for your kind words that I have written " a beautiful, original and important piece of work." And for your assurance that you are all trying to be true to the vision of the piece. I wish you all the best creative support in doing this, and I continue to send my prayers and wishes that the play is a happy and rich experience. I look forward to seeing it with my friends and family in California.

With all best wishes and hopes for a smooth preview and opening, I remain

Truly,



Rebecca Wells

cc: Jamie Mandelbaum