White Guy on the Bus and A Doll’s House, Part 2

Director’s Note:

Difficult Conversations

One of the most inherently valuable features of theatre – of storytelling, in general – is the opportunity it offers to explore messy human issues in a safe space. This has been true since the Greeks gave us the Oresteia Trilogy, Oedipus and Medea.

Theatre sparks meaningful dialogue about important issues and questions, allows us to wrestle with their complexity with relatively low stakes. Questions may remain, but the audience and production team safely return to their homes after the performances with the added potential of effecting change.

The productions we have chosen for this fall are those kinds of plays. One takes us on an uncomfortable, tragic and ultimately unsettling journey into very pressing issues of racism and privilege. The other gives us a darkly comic take on love, marriage and their tenuous modern subsistence through an imagined sequel to the pivotal Ibsen drama, A Doll’s House.

Both are designed to provoke difficult conversations.

Nobody begins his or her day looking for these but we ignore them at our peril. If we are honest, we know we grow from them. And they certainly have a place in a Christian liberal arts college – no, they are imperative at a Christian liberal arts college!

The pandemic restrictions make difficult conversations more challenging. But it is our hope you will try. Maybe watch White Guy On The Bus with a mixed race group and find out what issues hit home for everyone. Take in A Doll’s House, Part 2, with both men and women present and listen to what each takes away.

These plays offer no easy solutions but they give us a chance to see ourselves, consider complex issues and begin – or continue – important, difficult conversations.

JSMiller