

*Drama Editor Janet Ehrlich Colson with George Freek*

*Hi George,*

*Tom and Charles asked me to select the playwright of my choice for the Drama Interview to be published in Issue 10 and you were the one.*

*If you'd be interested in participating I've some questions for you about your plays and your writing in general. I loved Mondo Pizzicato and well as the two other plays of yours we've published.*

JEC: *So, what goes through your head when you're getting ready to put your work out there to a dope rag like Fleas or to a theatre festival for that matter, I mean how did you find us and what accounts for our symbiotic relationship up to this point?*

GF: I discovered FOTD through a nycplaywrights.org listing. Looking at an issue, I felt like I had some material which might fit your mildly quirky taste. Apparently I was right. Thus our symbiotic relationship began.

JEC: *We've published a couple works of yours in subsequent volumes of Fleas, the first, at least since I've been infesting the place, was a send-up of formula films that was funneled to me in the boiler room from our fiction department (I won't even tell you how many flights of stairs were involved in the approval process, let's just say my hamstrings have nearly doubled in size). In Vol. 9, I broke from my own protocol and published your full-length script, Becoming Strangers because it was so f-ing good. Now, we're publishing your play of a more reasonable length, Mondo Pizzicato, in this, our milestone tenth issue. I must say, it's got a completely different tone than your other pieces. What's up with that? Was it a conscious or semi-conscious process?*

GF: The decision to write *Mondo Pizzicato* was conscious. I wanted to see if I could write something about characters who actually LIKED each other. The comedy springing in more or less classical farce fashion from a series of misunderstandings. I actually do know some fairly likeable characters, a few of whom are gay, so I added the gay theme to give the play a somewhat more contemporaneous feel.

JEC: *Do you eat homegrown mushrooms in order to take on a different writer persona?*

GF: I don't need homegrown mushrooms to take on a different persona. I'm naturally schizoid and pretty neurotic. I swing back and forth between various personae like a pendulum. However, it's sometimes hard to sustain when writing a play. Maybe mushrooms would help?

*JEC: You'll probably address some of this in your playwright's notes, but if there's something fascinating or cringe worthy to add (re: Mondo Pizzicato), be my guest.*

GF: This is a stumper! From my point of view, the most fascinating aspect of this play is that I ever had an impulse to write it. I can't honestly say where that came from! Where the "cringiest" arose is whether anyone would accept it and perhaps even enjoy it!

*JEC: Why plays? Is theatre even relevant? How do you manage?*

GF: Why plays is the easiest one to answer. I could lie and say I was born with this urgent love of theater. Unfortunately, very untrue. Since until grad school, while I'd read plenty of plays, I'd only seen, indifferently, just a few. But at that time I was beginning to contemplate a "career" and teaching at, say, a junior college seemed tantamount to a life sentence with no chance for parole. I'd failed pitifully at writing fiction. Knowing nothing of the mechanics of writing plays, I found a copy of *The Writer* magazine, which listed theaters claiming to produce new plays for PAY! That proved to be hogwash, but I'd written a play, which was subsequently performed at a playlab at the University of Wisconsin (Madison) and my director was Sharon Ott, then associated with the Milwaukee Repertory Theatre. That led to a residency with that company. Later on, a residency at Southern Methodist University. I guess that about exhaust my good fortune.

*Lovely work, George. Thanks for your time.*

*Janet Ehrlich Colson*

Drama Editor FOTD