

RICKEY and LANCE REENACT SCENES of HISTORY for GAY ZOOMERS

By Lee Lawing

WHY I LIKE IT: *Drama editor JANET COLSON writes:*

This wry playlet is bound to entertain some of us kiddos whether we're gay Zoomers or just crashing the party.

The play takes place on a Wednesday during a Zoom call in the summer of 2020. That's right, it's COVID time and Rickey and Lance, a couple who met on a Zoom Seminar ("Gay Boys who Love Death") while sheltering in place, are busy hosting their Zoom meeting in which they discuss topical topics (such as the Black Death in 1439) with all fifteen of their followers.

Through the compact storytelling we see an emerging type of mise en abym theatre in the specter of the pandemic. One in which a play could be done on a shoestring - or on the Zoom call that it's sending up. And playwright Lee Richard Lawing doesn't shy away from using the pandemic and virtual landscape as a backdrop

RICKEY (continued)

Some have you written in to say you're sick to death with this topic. Sick to death with all things . . .

LANCE

(Whispered)
Covid.

RICKEY

But that's a little like saying you're sick of all things about healthcare because we all go to the doctor. Or, that you're sick of all things funny because you all tell jokes and like to laugh.

Let's be clear. What passes as a relationship in the self-referential world of this play is about as unstable as the Internet on a Zoom call, but it does beg the question about what happens when our lives (and living rooms) are laid bare on social media but are devoid of meaningful human connection.

Fun for all ages with allusions to necrophilia and a (brief) mention of fisting. (Spacing and font size are playwright's own.)

Rickey and Lance Reenact Scenes of History for Gay Zoomers

Cast of Characters

RICKEY 20s, race-neutral, m

LANCE 20s, race-neutral, m

SET: Bare, representative of RICKEY's and LANCE's apartments.

PLACE: LANCE's and RICKEY's apartments

TIME: Early summer 2020. A Wednesday afternoon.

SETTING: Bare, representative of Rickey and Lance's apartment.

AT RISE: RICKEY and LANCE start their Zoom Show. Both have masks around their necks.

RICKEY

Hello all you gay Zoomers out there and welcome . . .
.

LANCE

. . . .to the Ricky and Lance Reenactments of history for gay Zoomers. Remember that all of you are on mute upon entry, so please use the chat feature to ask any and all questions.

(RICKEY and LANCE give the thumbs
up sign.)

RICKEY

Like so many of our recent shows, this show will deal
with

(LANCE does a drum roll with his
fingers over some surface.)

RICKEY (continued)

Plagues!

(LANCE cups his hands around his
mouth and does a low "Boo".)

RICKEY (continued)

Some have you written in to say you're sick to death
with this topic. Sick to death with all things . . .

LANCE

(Whispered)
Covid.

RICKEY

But that's a little like saying you're sick of all
things about healthcare because we all go to the
doctor. Or, that you're sick of all things funny
because you all tell jokes and like to laugh.

LANCE

Ricky and I are of the opinion that the past holds
nuggets for the present and future.

RICKEY

And so today we want to talk about that on this very
day, kissing was banned in England to stop the spread
of the Black Death back in 1439.

(LANCE puckers his lips together
and kisses the screen.)

RICKEY

Who knew you had such delicious lips, Lance?

LANCE

Thank you, Rickey.

RICKEY

One day when this is all over, I will enjoy kissing those lips.

LANCE

One more for good measure.

(LANCE puckers up and kisses the screen again. RICKY kisses his screen.)

RICKEY

Wait, we must slow down.

LANCE

And mask up!

(RICKY and LANCE mask up and then both kiss the screen.)

RICKEY

I bet you were wondering, Lance.

LANCE

What's that Rickey?

RICKEY

Did that ban help stop the advance of the Black Death in England in 1439?

LANCE

It's like you can read my mind.

RICKEY

I know right? We have such great on-screen chemistry. Do we want to tell the audience just how we met in the time of Covid?

LANCE

They've heard it before.

RICKEY

I can see new people on. We're up to fifteen today.
New faces always mean ones who don't know.

LANCE

True that.

(RICKY and LANCE sit back from
kissing the screens and pull the
masks down.)

LANCE (continued)

We met on a Zoom Seminar entitled "Gay Boys who love
Death!"

RICKY

Although it seems like that would be such a heavy
topic to meet someone that you clicked with, Lance
asked a question during that presentation that caught
my attention certainly, and from that day forward, I
knew that I wanted to shelter in place with him the
first day we could actually do that.

LANCE

It's coming.

RICKY

It sure is. Our love of being gay and death lead to
us chatting after the seminar on FaceTime and then we
chatted on one of the dating apps and then that just
lead to us wanting to do our own thing of helping the
world.

LANCE

One topic at a time.

RICKY

There's a question from Roger D.

LANCE

Hi, Roger, welcome to the show. Roger asks where our
favorite ghoulish spot would be to have sex when we
can do that?

RICKY

Good question, Roger D. Mine would be a cemetery.

LANCE

Yes. That would be mine as well.

RICKEY

There's another question from . . . oh wait, that's a little too off colored for a public show. Although. . .

(LANCE looks at the question and starts to laugh.)

LANCE

I'd enjoy that for sure.

RICKEY

Are you sure? Did you see the question?

LANCE

Yes, I did. And it's a yes. I would do that for sure.

RICKEY

Really?

LANCE

Yes. Wouldn't you?

RICKEY

No. I wouldn't.

LANCE

We can take that offline after we finish the call.

RICKEY

That's one sex act that's not negotiable for me.

LANCE

Really?

RICKEY

Yes.

LANCE

Roger D says he'd be willing to do that. No negotiations needed.

RICKEY

Go find Roger D then. I am not doing that. Not now,

not ever.

LANCE

Roger D says that sounds like you are a wet blanket, Rickey.

RICKEY

Wet blanket? I'll have you know that I have done a lot of various things, Roger D. But that act is not one of them. And I am OK with that.

LANCE

Roger D says . . .

RICKEY

You know what? How about this Roger D? How about you go find another Zoom call to zoom into and destroy that relationship instead of this one.

LANCE

Roger D says sure thing and . . . oh, thank you for the number.

RICKEY

Really? Thank you for you know what? Go find Roger D. Go find the cemetery and have fun with Roger D. It's perfectly clear that we would never work.

LANCE

You're letting one fan come between us?

RICKEY

That and one fist, yes. And for your information, that ban in England didn't work. They all still caught the Black Death even though the forbade everyone from kissing. But that doesn't mean that I can't tell you and your new playmate to kiss off.

(RICKY leaves the meeting. LANCE is left alone.)

LANCE

Well, that was a bit of an overreaction during our reenactment call. Join me next week when I'll be . . .
..

(LANCE looks at the chat again.)

LANCE (continued)

. . . .Roger D and I will be sharing with you another fascinating reenactment of famous historic events. This time we will be acting out the events that led up to the Solidarity Work Movement in the early 1900s. Till next week.

(LANCE holds up his fist and ends the call.)

BLACKOUT

THE PLAYWRIGHT SPEAKS: *I was initially inspired to write about this because of an article I saw in Weird History about kissing being banned in England to help try and stop the spread of the Black Death. They were unsuccessful as it turns out. Then I thought about two people doing a Zoom call for their followers which then lead to the play. At first, I didn't plan on making it about fisting, but as I was re-writing the first draft I needed something else that would make Rickey walk out of the call and relationship. Fisting is a pretty divisive sexual act and topic among the gay community. Hence the end scene where Lance makes the sign of the fist that also was of historical significance for many movements. I've been really excited to be on the National Play Exchange where I have been able to read all sorts of new and exciting works by many great playwrights who share their work there. These plays have inspired me lately and I am forever grateful for being a part of this exciting network.*

AUTHOR'S BIO: I won the Young Playwrights Festival with my play ***Doll***. Other productions include ***Prosperity*** at the 17th Annual Playwrights Award at Wichita State University; ***Delivering Dad*** at the DramaRama Festival in San Francisco. ***A Murder of Crows*** was selected as the best drama at the WIT 2015 Kauai Shorts 10-Minute Play Festival. The short play ***The Chorus Awaits Its Cue!*** was a part of the anthology *Off the Rocks*. WIT selected my play ***Trinkets for Jenkie*** as part of their 2017 Festival. I participated in the 2018 William Inge Playwright's Festival with my one act play ***Crashing Through Kauai*** and most recently my play ***Alien Lovers and Friends*** was selected by the 2019 Last Frontier in Valdez, Alaska and my short Play ***Eve Addam's Tearoom*** was a part of the BUA Takes 10: Stonewall Edition In Buffalo June 2019. My short play,

Alien Lovers and Friends Anonymous will be produced twice this year, this summer in Virginia and later in November in London, England..