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


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!”

RICKEY

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.

RICKEY

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.

RICKEY

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?

RICKEY

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.

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.

Really?

LANCE
Yes.

RICKEY
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,
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 forbad 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 (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.