

<">

Washington Examiner home delivery | classifieds | autos | jobs | real estate | home listings | advertise

Search

**ARGOSY UNIVERSITY** Online Programs

Experience the **Human Side of Success**

CHOOSE YOUR PROGRAM

**HOME MAKEOVER**

CLICK HERE FOR TIPS & DEALS

Welcome, **Guest** Sign In | Register

View today's E-Dition



Free email alert

washingtonexaminer.com



Wednesday, April 28, 2010 | Last Update 10:33 EDT

Washington, DC



Scattered Clouds 49°F  
High/Low: 63°F / 41°F  
(click for forecast)

Home News Politics Local **Opinion** Economy Sports Lifestyle

Classifieds Jobs Autos Home Listings

Editorials | Beltway Confidential | OpinionZone | Nate Beeler | Columnists | Mark Tapscott | Dave Freddoso | Mark Hemingway |

## THEATER

[Print] [Email]

SHARE 0 tweet

### 'The Trip to Bountiful' details a cherished past

By: **SARA SCHWARTZ**  
Special to The Examiner  
April 28, 2010

Horton Foote was a master of realism and of everyday existence. Devoted to the American South, Foote loved to reflect the voices of plain people living out the ordinary, jagged stories of their lives. Bethesda's Quotidian Theatre is producing a moving version of one of Foote's best-loved plays, "The Trip to Bountiful."



#### If you go

'The Trip to Bountiful'

**Where:** Quotidian Theatre, The Writer's Center, 4508 Walsh St., Bethesda

**When:** 8 p.m. Friday and Saturday, 2 p.m. Sunday; through May 16

**Info:** \$20-\$25; 301-816-1023; quotidiantheatre.org

The play is set in 1947 in a cramped, three-room apartment in Houston. An elderly woman, Carrie Watts (Jane Squier Bruns), sits in a rocking chair past midnight, unable to sleep. Soon she is joined by her middle-aged son, Ludie (John Collins), who also can't sleep.

#### Live discussion about lifestyle:



1%

Peak was 1 day ago Last 6 hours

20843 recent posts



Latest update: 5 sec ago



pengen ganti avatar pake foto yearbook kmareeen. tp kepanjangan deh kayaknyaaaa huuu  
Posted by hanhanc on twitter

Follow the Conversation

[Trend Micro Official Site](#)

New! 2010 Trend Micro Security. Protect Your Data. Download Now.

[TrendMicro.com](#)

Ads by Google

What is Scan?

**network solutions**

WELCOME TO THE **SMALLVOLUTION**

Start with 25% off your new website.

WHERE YOUR VISION GROWS ONLINE

#### MOST POPULAR STORIES

- A carefully crafted immigration law in Arizona
- Obama covered up HHS report until after healthcare vote?
- Timothy P. Carney: Goldman rallies for Obama in Wall Street 'reform'
- Obama's election year pitch leaves out white males
- Noemie Emery: Media still clueless about Tea Parties

The first scene establishes their close relationship. Ludie respectfully calls his mother "Ma'am" and is concerned about her being up so late. She gets him warm milk as she did when he was a boy. The relaxed atmosphere is broken only by noises from the nearby highway, where cars speed and honk their horns, and then by Ludie's wife, Jessie Mae (Laura Russell), who enters scolding her mother-in-law and husband for not sleeping.

As Jessie Mae plays the radio loud enough to wake the neighbors, and complains about a missing recipe, about Carrie's missing retirement check and about Carrie's continual humming of hymns, it becomes clear that Jessie Mae is a selfish, controlling woman, in opposition to her sweet, considerate mother-in-law.

Carrie is understandably miserable. For her, there is only one solution: to return to Bountiful, the small Gulf Coast town where she grew up and raised her children, where she sat on her porch at night and smelled the sea breezes. When she expresses that desire to Ludie, he reminds her that they must remain in Houston where his work is. But to Carrie, flight -- not only to Bountiful but also away from Jessie Mae -- remains the only option. The remainder of the play is devoted to Carrie's efforts to achieve her return to Bountiful.

Under Jack Sbarbori's sure-handed direction, the details of Foote's poetic script are completely realized. Not a line is rushed. Only Jessie Mae is in a hurry, to get her hair done or buy the latest movie magazine.

Bruns neatly articulates Carrie's dilemma and her dream. She appears fragile and demure, but inside she's a tiger. She doesn't live in the past but she does cherish it. Collins plays Ludie as a dutiful, sensitive son. He does a balancing act as a husband; he's not a coward but is unwilling to put his wife in her place. Foote drew Jessie Mae is a complex character, in part cruel, in part just foolish. Russell emphasizes her silliness. Samantha Merrick, Steve La Rocque and John Decker are excellent in smaller roles.

Sbarbori's set perfectly evokes the Houston apartment: a wooden table and three chairs; old-fashioned, patterned wallpaper; free-standing screens. Two later sets are equally effective, suggesting Greyhound bus travel of old through a few details: a wall-mounted telephone, a calendar, a Coke sign. Stephanie Mumford's costumes are marvelous period pieces, particularly her choices to illustrate Jessie Mae's astonishingly bad taste.

There is a profound sense of closure at the end of this "Trip to Bountiful." As Bruns plays it, Carrie achieves her epiphany. She sees her beloved redbirds and scissor-tails. She realizes that the place she grew up in no longer exists, but that she will never lose the dignity and strength that home gave her. In the final scene, Bruns' Carrie is the essential Foote character: strong, resourceful and brimming over with sentiment, not sentimentality.

Gene Healy: The coming low-sodium dystopia  
 Arizona takes the cuffs off police  
 Barbara Hollingsworth: Fannie Mae owns patent on residential 'cap and trade' exchange  
 After policy stumbles, Obama turns to politics  
 Obama's credibility crisis

**More from Barbara Mackay**

- 'The Trip to Bountiful' details a cherished past
- There's delightful disorder in Seville in 'The Marriage of Figaro'
- When your child is fearful of homework
- Theater J's 'Good for the Jews' thought-provoking, provocative
- 'That Face' chronicles libidos and self-

**Topics**

Washington Examiner

loathing among London's upper crust

### Reader Comments

All comments on this page are subject to our Terms of Use and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Examiner or its staff. Comment box is limited to 200 words. Comments that advocate violence, racism, or libel as well as comments written in ALL CAPS are not permitted.

### Add New Comment



You are commenting as a **Guest**. Optional: Login below.



Large empty text box for entering a comment.

Name  Website (optional)

Email   Subscribe to all comments by email

**Post as Guest**

### Showing 0 comments

Sort by **Best Rating**  Subscribe by email  Subscribe by RSS

Trackback URL

blog comments powered by DISQUS

#### SPORTS

### Game 6: Habs force one more game, down Caps, 4-1

Hey, Patrick Roy, Jacques Plante, Ken Dryden and the... [Full story](#)

#### WORLD

### Risk grows that Israel will go alone to take out Iranian nukes

The growing rift between the Obama administration and... [Full story](#)

#### LOCAL



### Tens of thousands beat parking, traffic tickets in D.C.

Nearly three-fifths of motorists who challenged their D.... [Full story](#)

#### Sponsored Links

##### Free Hot Stock Alerts

Make money in penny stocks with our free alerts. Join Now for Free! [www.KillerPennyStocks.com](http://www.KillerPennyStocks.com)

##### Penny Stock Soaring 3000%

Sign up for Free to find out what the next 3000% Stock Winner Is! [www.PennyStocksUniverse.com](http://www.PennyStocksUniverse.com)

##### \$350,000 Life Insurance!

Coverage as low as \$13.04/month! Free, no obligation quotes to help you save. [www.QuoteWhiz.com](http://www.QuoteWhiz.com)

##### TODAY: iPads for \$23.74?

Special Report: Macbooks are being auctioned for an incredible 80% off! [www.QuiBids.com](http://www.QuiBids.com)

[Buy a link here](#)



[RSS](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Intern](#) | [Video](#) | [Maps](#) | [Mobile](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [Terms of Use](#) | [Privacy Policy](#) | [Rack Locations](#) | [Advertise](#)