

All you got is a careful of blues

THEATRE

Gideon's Blues

Sir James Dunn Theatre,
Dalhousie Arts Centre
January 9-14 @ 8 p.m. with Saturday/
Sunday matinees at 4/2 p.m.
Tickets: \$15.25 for adults,
\$13.25 for students and seniors

BY TIM COVERT

"This is one nigger-hating town," Poppy used to say. And he was from Alabama."

Mama Lou uses these words to sum up the racially unbalanced climate of Halifax in Neptune's final Studio Series Production of this season, *Gideon's Blues*. Written by Haligonian George Boyd and first staged as an Upstart production in 1990, this disturbingly relevant social drama looks at how the difficulties of being black in an unknowingly racist city combine with the easy-living lure of the drug trade to destroy a family.

Gideon Steele, his wife Charlene, and his mother Mama Lou are spending the summer

without Gideon's two children, who are staying with their maternal grandmother in the country. Gideon, a university graduate, is frustrated at his inability to find a decent job and give his family the good things in life. Seve, his brother-in-law, is a small-time drug dealer who sets Gideon up with the shadowy Grebanier. Gideon becomes a drug smuggler, telling his family lies that they are quite anxious to believe. Charlene begins a community crusade to clean up the streets while Gideon is busy dirtying them up.

Gideon's Blues is narrated by Mama Lou as she talks to her deceased husband Poppy. The story progresses in a series of flashbacks by Mama Lou on the day of Gideon's funeral. Her character is the focal point of the story and is artfully played by the delightful, dynamic Jackie Richardson. Boyd gives the character such gems as, "Honey, I knew the blues when they were still searching for a colour." With her jovial story-telling, Mama Lou is endearing and she

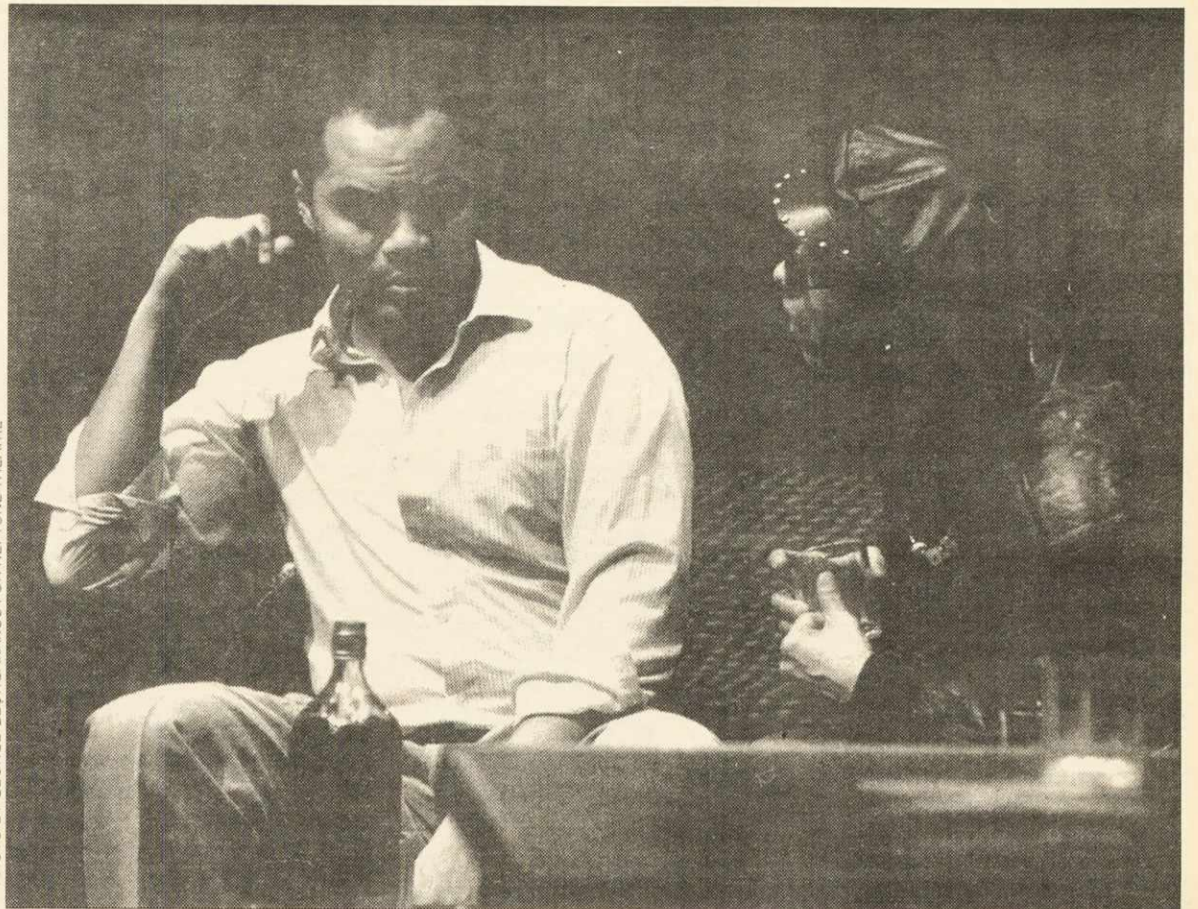


PHOTO BY GEORGE GEORGAKAKOS FOR NEPTUNE THEATRE

Troy Adams as Gideon and Walter Borden as Seve in *Gideon's Blues* by George Boyd.

has the hearts of the audience as she laments the downfall of her son.

Dalhousie Theatre graduate Troy Adams is Gideon and makes the transition from frustrated janitor to ruthless dealer effortlessly. His confrontation with street

junkie Amos (Lucky Campbell) is gripping: "You touch something that belongs to me again and I'll cut off your balls and stuff them down your throat."

Camille James-Adams is excellent as Gideon's wife Charlene and rivets the audience when she confronts him with the truth. Campbell plays the junkie character well.

This is the first time I have seen Walter Borden perform and the nationally acclaimed actor played the part of street hustler Seve with style and a swagger. As stereotypical as some of the lines seemed, they had a charm all their own. Karen Robinson's Jamaican accent was not completely masked in her portrayal of street walker and junkie Baye, Seve's girlfriend. Filtered through her character's trash talking mouth, Robinson's dialogue had a unique flavour. Her portrayal of the downtrodden junkie trying to survive on the streets struck a sympathetic tone.

Doug Innis gave Monsieur Grebanier a gravelly french accent that reverberated the thickness of the character's power. His warning to "Mama Louise" was deliv-

ered smoothly and serpentine as Richardson's eyes grow wider and wider with fear.

The setup of the Dunn space and its lighting is neatly done and Stephen Britton Osler and Leigh Ann Vardy should be congratulated. The stunning addition of an actual street light — with pole — that towers over the set created one of the best street scenes I have ever seen. The mainly blues background music provided a superb atmosphere. Gideon's transformation from average guy to well-dressed dealer was well-costumed as was Baye's trashy, unsexy hooker sexuality.

Gideon's Blues could still use a little touch-up in the dialogue of the opening scenes, but in saying that I am nitpicking and taking away from the overall excellence of the drama.

George Boyd's present-day tragedy communicates extremely well how easy it is to slip to the wrong side of the law and how society is encouraging many people to slide in that direction. Actions ultimately catch up with those who perpetrate them, however, and if *Gideon's Blues* has a moral then that, I think, is it.

the teetotalling ten

CKDU 97.5 FM

tc	lc	wo	cc	artist	title	label
1	3	4	◆	Bob Wiseman	Accidentally Acquired Beliefs	WEA
2	18	3		Various Artists	Swarm of Drones	Ashphodel
3	2	5		The Cardigans	Life	Polygram
4	7	4	◆	Len	Superstar	Funtrip
5	16	4		2 Foot Flame	Self-titled	Matador
6	3	5	◆	No Means No	The Worldhood of the World	Alt.Tentacles
7	—	ne	◆	Ashley MacIsaac	Hi How are You Today	A&M
8	21	2		Pizzicato Five	The Sound of Music By...	Matador
9	—	ne	◆	Rhythm Activism	More Kick	Les PagesNoires
10	11	2	◆	Various Artists	Murderfest	Murder

*: Local Artist
cc: Canadian Artist

re: Re-Entry
lc: Last Chart

tc: This Chart
ne: New Entry

To win one of 40 passes for a premiere screening of *From Dusk Till Dawn* on Thursday, January 18, come on up to the Gazette with the answer to one of these questions:

1. On which TV show did George Clooney and Quentin Tarantino work together?
2. In which movie were Quentin Tarantino and Juliette Lewis involved?
3. In which movie did Quentin Tarantino first direct Harvey Keitel?

SUB, room 312

Schedule of Events

January 11 - Volunteer meeting, DWC, 4:30 pm. If you would like to volunteer and cannot make this first meeting, please call Kelly at 494-2432.

January 16 - Organizing meeting for I.W.D. DWC, 4:30 pm. If you would like to be involved, have any suggestions or comments, or want to volunteer your time, please call Heather at the Centre.

January 17 - Organizing meeting for Black History Month activities, 4 pm.

January 26 - New Year's Potluck. For more information, please call the DWC.

Dalhousie Women's Centre
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