

## ... and Glory

Sarah Gignac  
OF THEATRE CRITIC

*The Drawer Boy*  
Vancouver Playhouse  
Until March 9

It's not very often that a much anticipated theatre event lives up to all the hype it has generated. Luckily for theatre fans, *The Drawer Boy* is a delightful exception to the rule.

Playwright Michael Healy wrote *The Drawer Boy* in 1999, and it raised quite a commotion from critics and audiences alike. It won all sorts of awards, had a very successful national tour, and was reproduced by several Canadian companies. This kind of response is about as good as it

gets for Canadian playwrights, and it doesn't happen often.

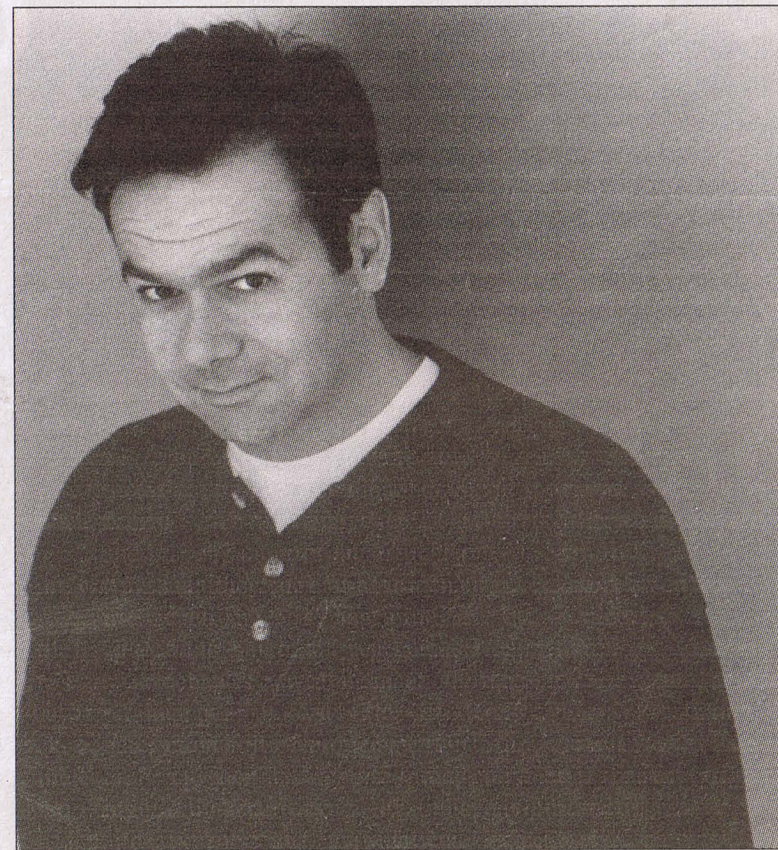
*The Drawer Boy* is inspired by a show that was performed in Toronto in the early '70s. A group of actors worked with some farmers to produce a collaborative play. *The Farm Show* was a huge success, and it was a very powerful experience for both the actors and the farmers.

In *The Drawer Boy*, Miles (Tom Barnett) is a young actor that comes to live with farmers Morgan (Jerry Franken) and Angus (David Fox). His intentions are to help out around the farm, in order to collect material for a play he and his friends are working on. He finds himself getting drawn into the lives of Morgan and Angus, two seemingly small-time farmers with an extraordinary history. Morgan, a softhearted man with a strong but subtle sense of humour, runs the farm and

cares for his old friend Angus. Angus is a little slow, although it is difficult to tell what's wrong with him—aside from the fact that he appears to have no short-term memory capabilities. The more Miles discovers about these two men, the more their lives are changed forever.

Healy has written a wonderful story, told by three fascinating characters. Fox, Barnett and Franken bring his funny, fast-paced dialogue to life and together the three create a powerful emotional bond that is rarely achieved on stage. They have the audience completely captivated from beginning to end.

It's amazing to see great writers and great actors come together on one stage. This is why such a fuss was raised about *The Drawer Boy* in the first place. Not only does it live up to the high expectations, it surpasses them.



Playwright/auteur Michael Healy