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Morrison Center Stage II

Boise State University Department of Theatre Arts

presents

U. S. A.

October 5-8 & 11-14, 1995

featuring

Sara M Bruner Randy Davison Sally Anne Eames

Rebecca Prescott Samuel Read

Ben Whipple

in a dramatic revue by

Paul Shyre & John Dos Passos

Directed by

Richard Klautsch

Setting by

Micheal Baltzell

Costumes by

Stephen R. Buss

lighting by

Phil Atakson

Choreography by

Marla Hansen

Voice Coach

Ann Klautsch

Musicologist

Jeanne Belfy

Sound by

Joe Jacoby

Stage Manager

Flint Weisser

Presented by special arrangement with Samuel French Inc.

Sara M Bruner { Player D, Janey }

- *Freshman theatre arts major, BSU.
- *Audrey, *Little Shop of Horrors*, Burley High School.
- *Member, International Thespian Society.
- *Plays violin and guitar.

Randy Davison { Player B, Joe }

- *Theatre arts major, senior, BSU.
- *Appeared on *America's Funniest People*
- *stand-up comic, member of local comed group.
- *Member of play selection committee

Sally Anne Eames { Player E, Gertrude }

- *Senior theatre arts major, BSU.
- *Intern, Idaho Shakespeare Festival, 1995.
- *Pegeen, *Playboy of the Western World*, BSU 1995.
- *Lusia, *A Shayna Maidel*, BSU, 1994.

Rebecca Prescott {Player F, Eleanor }

- *Senior, Theatre arts/music major, BSU.
- *Intern, Idaho Shakespeare Festival, 199
- *Gloria, *Little Lulu*, ITY, 1995.
- *Coordinator of Idaho High School

Theatre Arts Festival**Samuel Read {Player A, Moorehouse }**

- *Junior, Theatre arts major, BSU.
- *Intern, Idaho Shakespeare Festival, 1995.
- *Artistic director: Theatre majors association.

Ben Whipple { Player C, Dick Savage }

- *Theatre arts/secondary ed major, BSU.
- *Tae kwon do.
- *Honors student at BSU.
- *Honor thespian, Burley High School.

*Film: *Not This Part of the World*.

ACT I ♦ INTERMISSION ♦ ACT II**Production Crew**

Technical Director	Props Master	Publicity	Assistant Stage Manager
Micheal Baltzell	Linda Prettyman	Charles Lauterbach	Heather Murray
Assistant Director	Assistant to the Director	Light Board Operator	Sound Board Operator
Donna Selle	Jeff Lawrence	Theresa Flowers	Eric Wieseman
Master Electrician	Projectionist	Photo Archivist	Costume Shop Manager & Cutter
Kelly Melton	Kristy Martin	Ashley Martell	Rebecca Hoffman
House Manager	Graphic Designer	Assistant Publicity	
Barbara Jean Griffith	Emily McGowan	James B. Fisk	Karen Craig
Dressers	Wardrobe	Scenic Construction	
Tara Gladfelter	Pat Durie	Kristy Martin	
Julie Marchesini		TA 117	
	Costume Construction		
TA 117	Wendy L. Ward	Laura Alaniz	
Dawn Brown	Shannon Shepherdson		

About Dos Passos :

Like a good many of his literary contemporaries, he had gone, after a Harvard education, to be an ambulanceman in France during the First World War. His first novels are reflections of that experience, but it was with *Manhattan Transfer* (1925) that Dos Passos found his way to Modernist form. Like Joyce's *Ulysses*, Doblin's *Berlin Alexanderplatz* or Andrei Biely's *Saint Petersburg*, this is an attempt to convey the complex, simultaneous, cinematic consciousness of the massive contemporary city. With its expressionist techniques of startling juxtaposition, rapid cutting, fragmentation, it owes a good deal to the cinema of Eisenstein and Griffith. The high-rise city, the jostle of crowds, the transit of massed people through skyscrapers and subways dominate the book. As Jean-Paul Sartre said in an admiring essay, Dos Passos seems to invent for us the "authorless novel," with "characterless characters" guided by an overall sensation of urban experience. It is a synchronic novel, a work of juxtaposition and simultaneity, pluralized narration and the intersection of documentary material with personal stories.

Many of these methods helped to shape *U.S.A.*, but in the interests of tracing the growth of a modern history—the history of the United States from its optimistic and progressive hopes at the turn into the twentieth century, the "American century," through the crisis year of 1919, when Woodrow Wilson's hopes began to fail, and so to the crass materialism of the 1920s, the era of "the Big Money." It covers the dying of the progressive impulses that had animated early twentieth-century America, the move from simple to complex capitalism, from a production to consumption economy, from innocence to modern experience. Dos Passos sees all this corrupting the psychology of his characters as they break faith with any idea of community or even of a shared common language he was early in expressing his sympathy for a left-wing interpretation of modern American culture. But *U.S.A.* avoids the methods of simple documentary or naive realism, drawing instead on the techniques of Modernist collage and fragmentation.

U.S.A. is a work where Modernist experimental sensibility meets the radical and reformist spirit of the 1930s; it is both a vision and a critique. What divides and limits this land of great prospects, popular energies and noble myths is the power of capital, the weight of war, the loss of community, the domination of indifference and greed. In the prologue the young Vag wanders the streets and highways and tries, like Whitman, to include all contradictions: "U.S.A. is the world's greatest river-valley fringed with mountains and hills, U.S.A. is a set of bigmouthed officials with too many bank-accounts." He places his hope where Dos Passos himself seeks to place it: "But mostly U.S.A. is the speech of the people." Yet if the book seeks, as the poet Carl Sandburg did during the 1930s, to recover the native speech of the people, it is also a complexly layered system of elaborate discourses. As with Pound's *Cantos*, its technical fragmentation seems to lead us to a vision of disconnection, a world where the gap ever widens between rhetorical statement and actual meanings, between ideal and real. As history turns downward after 1919, the fragmentation increases, and false rhetorics increasingly overwhelm the languages of humanity and personality. In the age of "history the billiondollar speedup," language must struggle to maintain contact with the world of actual experience: "America our nation has been beaten by strangers who have turned our language inside out." (In *From Puritanism to Postmodernism* by Richard Ruland and Malcolm Bradbury)

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Productions entered on the Participating level are eligible for inclusion at the KC/ACTF regional festival and can also be considered for invitation to the non-competitive KC/ACTF national festival at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, DC, in the spring of 1996

Last year more than 900 productions and 18,000 students participated in the American College Theater Festival nationwide. By entering this production, our department is sharing in the KC/ACTF goals to help college theater grow and to focus attention on the exemplary work produced in college and university theaters across the nation.