

# John Guares Theatre: The Art of Connecting

Robert J. Andreach



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From the 1960s to the present day, John Guare's plays have ranged from one-act to cyclic, realistic to surrealistic, naturalistic to experimental, and tragic to comic dramas. This study's approach to the cornucopia the playwright himself provided when in an interview he gave a fundamental aesthetic principle of his craft. Like a person - and Guare's plays develop the personal as well as the artistic self - a play must be grounded in reality; only then can it soar. The ground is traditional theatre with characters, no matter how larger than life they can be, and plot, no matter how illogical it can be. The soaring is in interrupting the action with monological narratives and musical interludes, bringing characters back from the dead, and having the action take hairpin turns into a mixture of genres and styles, modes and tones. In verbal and visual images, the flight invokes works by authors as varied as Aeschylus and Whitman, Dante and Feydeau, Verdi and Romberg. Soaring from ground to new ground, the theatre creates the transmission of the American heritage in 'Lake Hollywood', an idealism corrupted by a fraudulent American Dream in 'Lydie Breeze', and the recovery of the past in 'A Few Stout Individuals'. As Guare said about his plays: they 'interconnect.'

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