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Better Now Than Ever

Scott Henkle

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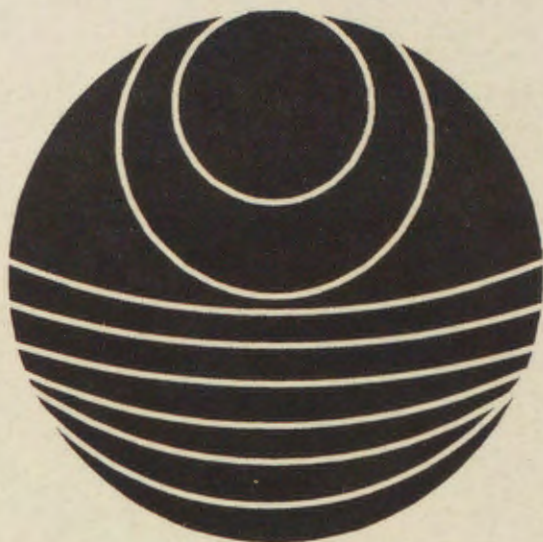
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John Carroll University Department of Communications
presents



better now
than ever

written and directed by Scott Henkle

Klein Television Studio: October 4-6 & 10-13
For ticket information call: 397-4428

On Better Now Than Ever

In little more than three years, both a century and a millennia will end.

In the face of such a cataclysmic event, there is a struggle to define, to define one's identity and position. What is this period in history? What defines it? What details does it pluck from its everything to be defined by, or to define itself by? Is such definition even possible, or is it something only attributable later . . . when retrospect seems to simplify the plurality? We constantly struggle to define periods: the fifties "are" suburbs, nuclear families, big cars, growth; the sixties, social revolution; the seventies, disco music; even the eighties have already been defined as greedy and decadent. But can we believe that the average day in the 50's was less complex, or that any of us were more greedy ten years ago? Perhaps these are only myths, created to help us define the undefinable, to stabilize inherently unstable life.

Such definition is problematic, surely. Yet, despite the difficulty, it seems nearly irresistible.

So then, how will this end of the century be defined? What will we choose (or what will be chosen) to define this moment in history? In recent years we have witnessed incredible growth in mass communication. This growth, through television, faxes, cellular phones, e-mail, and recently through the world wide web, is unprecedented. These phenomena could clearly become the defining sentiment of this historical epoch, this end of the century. Will the explosion of communication accessibility, the linking of the entire world through electronic avenues of communication, historically overshadow other, more sinister definers, such as the plague we call AIDS?

If we, for now, assume that it will, what are the repercussions of the increase in communication avenues? Is daily life more convenient? More complex? Is the fact that I can now communicate with millions of people easily through these electronic means beneficial as I contact people I never would have otherwise . . . or is it detrimental, as face-to-face contact becomes less and less desirable? Do these means bring us together, or keep us apart? Is the world better now than ever?

These are the questions *Better Now Than Ever* asks, as well as a larger one: Does it matter? Isn't our constant struggle to connect (not electronically or physically or romantically . . . but mentally/spiritually) in the face of eternally overwhelming obstacles the only thing worth being optimistic about?

One wonders. And the wondering is infinitely more important than the end . . . because it never does.

On *Better Now Than Ever*

I am reluctant to call this performance "avant-garde," in the sense of being a part of the "advanced guard," unlike anything coming before. *Better Now Than Ever* draws stylistically upon a long tradition of non-linear/non-representational theatre, from Meyerhold in turn of the century Russia to the present day work of Richard Foreman's Ontological-Hysterical Theatre and Cleveland's own Theatre Labyrinth. Today abstraction has thankfully lost most of its ability to shock, becoming infinitely more valuable and versatile as merely another mode of expression. For me, non-linear/non-representational methods are often aesthetically preferable, possessing a vitality lost when theatre "pretends;" but most importantly, the methods used in this performance are inextricably tied to its subject.

On *Better Now Than Ever*

Better Now Than Ever is this performance, nothing else.

-Scott Henkle, writer/director

cast

Ed Armbruster
Maureen DeMers
Jim Miles
Andrea Ostrowski

who's who in cast & crew

cast

Ed Armbruster was in *The Good Woman of Setzuan*, *The Day They Shot John Lennon*, *The Runner Stumbles*, and he refuses to leave!

Maureen DeMers is a freshman from Newark, OH. She has performed in several shows at Newark Catholic High School and Weathervane Playhouse, where she spent her summer volunteering, working a mind-numbing number of backstage positions. She would like to thank God for the talent and courage He has so abundantly given to her.

Jim Miles is a senior English major from Cleveland who enjoys breakdancing and literary criticism in his spare time. This is his first show at JCU, but his outside credits include *Alice in Wonderland*, *Tony-n-Tina's Wedding*, and *Dignans Avengers*. Jim dedicates his performance to Anne Sertich and John Kovatch. Keep it real.

Andrea Ostrowski is a freshman who is thankful to be standing in this show, having torn ligaments in her ankle only a couple of weeks ago in a grisly computer classroom accident. May her bravery not go unnoticed. She would like to thank her family & friends for all of their support, time, & help. She would especially like to thank Mrs. P. for all she has done for her.

production staff

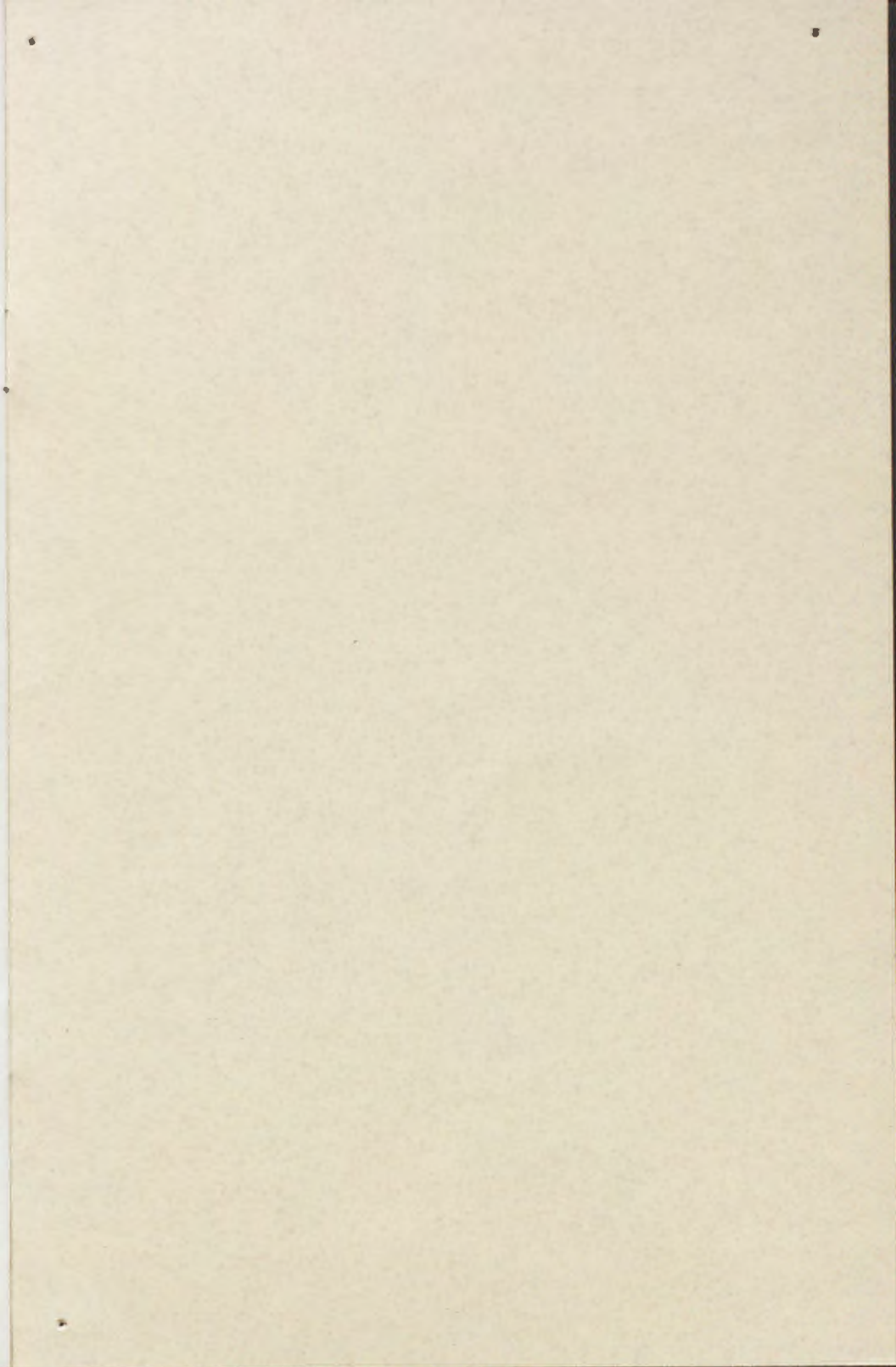
Scott Henkle (Writer/Director/Designer) promises to keep working on his writing.

Jay Svoboda (Stage Manager), a senior from Fairfield, Connecticut, is the Executive Producer of John Carroll's "JCTV News." He has been involved in television production since the fourth grade, where he coaxed classmates into talking into fake microphones and cardboard cameras, boring everyone involved to tears. Friends say the only difference today is that the cameras and microphones are real.

Heidi Selz (Movement Advisor) received her B.S. in Dance Education from Bowling Green University. She has been living and performing in the Cleveland area for the past two years. Currently Heidi dances with the Repertory Project, a modern dance company based in Cleveland.

Katie Farrell (Assistant Director/ Video Operator) is a First Year student who was on cast and crew for shows at St. Edward High School. She would like to thank her parents and Jeff Norris for their support.

Patipan Paktipatt (Promotions/Box Office) is himself, predominantly.



Everyone involved in *Better Now Than Ever* would like to thank
the following people for their integral role in this production:

Dr. Karen Gygli
Keith Nagy
Dr. Alan Stephenson
Dr. Jeanne Colleran
Jim Sislo
Melissa Somrack
Tendrils
&
Ted

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