

Noah and the HOA  
"Hurrah" for Merce Cunningham and John Cage

by

Mickey Bolmer

(20 min, 2, comedy)

What is that unapproved structure in Noah Rothman's back yard?

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Produced as part of "Shorts" by The New Play House, Frederick, MD,  
October 7-15, 2005, Jonah Sea Knight, artistic director  
Alexandra Hoge, Director  
Douglas "DC" Cathro as Guy Chambers

Noah and the HOA by Mickey Bolmer © July 2005

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Characters

sound effects person  
Guy Chambers, Jr., President Bluffington Haven HOA

Set

the All Purpose Room in the Bluffington Haven Elementary School set up for a meeting; center stage a folding table with nine chairs facing the audience; two or three rows of folding chairs facing the table; a similar table and chair stage right or left for the sound effects person turned ninety degrees to the center table

Note

The play consists of three parts:

1. prologue with a sound effect,
2. a body with 8 sound effects and 11 letters with comments, and
3. an epilogue with a sound effect.

In the body, the eight sound effects are:

1. animals, perhaps backyard, farm, wild or pets
2. feet in puddles
3. Louis Armstrong and/or Ella Fitzgerald
4. water dripping
5. tea kettle whistling
6. drinking water
7. sawing & hammering
8. drum

Each of these 8 sound effects is to last a minute; within that minute, the effect may be, but need not be, continuous. However the sound is produced, the production must be done on stage. For example, if a recording is used, then the sound effects person must “push a button” that produces the effect.

In the body, the letters with comments are continuous, i.e. Guy finishes one and goes on to the next.

The numbers beside the sound effects and beside the letters do not indicate their performance order. Instead, these numbers will be used to randomly order the sound effects and the letters with comments. Before the performance, Guy will draw numbers 1-11 from a hat, thus determining that night’s performance order for the letters with comments. The sound effects person will draw numbers 1-8 out of a hat, thus determining that night’s performance order for the sound effects. The drawings may or may not be done before the audience; for example, the letters could be blown off the table.

In the first performance, the director and actor decided that the first 3 letters would be read and then for the next 8 letters the actor would play the letter writer as well as Guy Chambers. This worked very well!

## Prologue

(with rainstick)

(Guy is seated, center of the table. This is a man of calm, order, faith, kindness, and humor; he has never been late for a meeting or anything else. At 7:30 PM, he starts the meeting.)

GUY

Welcome neighbors to this special meeting of the Bluffington Haven Home Owners Association, convened at the request of ninety-nine members, nearly one half of our complete members and by far the largest community response in my time, exceeding the eight-one votes received when we asked the community whether or not a fountain should be installed in our pond for aeration and beauty and well over the 71 required by Article IX section j of the BHHOA Covenants which allows for one third of the members to, in writing, call, a special meeting. I am expecting the whole board and many more community members. Clearly, the sudden increase in the storm's severity has slowed some of us. We probably should have cancelled the meeting but we've become so storm accustomed; well, I propose that I wait ten minutes to see if we can get a quorum. As you know, two months ago, the Architectural Control Committee received an application from Mr. Noah Rothman. The application was to build a large wooden boat in his back yard. Because the BHHOA Covenants require that boats be garaged, the ACC denied the request. Mr. Rothman immediately appealed to the Board as per the AC Guidelines and his appeal was put on the agenda for the next regular board meeting, scheduled for next Tuesday at 7:30 PM at my house, 6200 Willow Stream Lane. All Bluffington Haven members are welcome at Board Meetings. Unfortunately, as you know, Mr. Rothman chose to begin construction without approval and so, as one neighbor put it, "energized" the community. The community has called this meeting to advise the board before it hears Mr. Rothman's appeal. I have talked with many of our neighbors in person and on the phone and have received many letters and e-mails. I am considering giving up e-mail. And yes, I have spoken often with Noah. He was to be our first speaker. While we wait for our neighbors, let me share some of these letters.

## Body

(Where Guy replied, a copy of the reply is stapled to the letter.)

1.

Dear Mr. Guy Chambers,

Are you asleep! Can you be unaware that Mr. Noah Rothman is constructing, what! It can't be a shed, more like a hanger! Right in his back yard practically touching the fence between his yard and our beautiful park! It's already fully a story high! I've just returned from the park. I had driven to Astabula to pick up my sister Mary Ellen; we found it a difficult and slow trip back and when, shortly after we arrived, the sun peeped out for a moment, I took Mary Ellen into our park, but even at the entrance, our

ears were assailed by hammering and sawing, sawing and hammering, and all manner of loud noises! What do we find but that Mr. Noah Rothman is building a giant...what! I can not believe that this thing has been approved by the Architectural Control Committee. Does it mean nothing to live in a Covenanted Community! Thirty-three years I've lived in beautiful Bluffington Haven. We have prevented the blight of TV antennas on roofs and pools in back yards. We have kept our standards high! A play structure! The Rothman's nine children are all grown and gone though I had heard that the oldest boy, the one who went bad, was back home living with his parents. What that sweet Nora has put up with! I would not have stood for it. I served on the Bluffington Haven Board of Directors proudly for eighteen years, nine of those on the Architectural Control Committee. Never would we have allowed such a blight upon our, as I always say, our classic and classy community! Please take immediate action! This is Pandora's Box wide open! Slam it shut now! If Noah Rothman is allowed to put up this monstrosity, what will be next! What will those Hatwells who moved in two years ago from France pull out of their hats, an Eiffel Tower! She's from Holland, a windmill! And then, Judith, our organic backyard farmer, why must organic be so ugly, I've told her that flowers are organic! Will you allow Judith to put up a wind powered electricity generator and just chop our beautiful songs birds to death! Act now!

your Bluffington Haven neighbor,  
Betty Crosby  
1915 Bluffington Haven Drive

2.

Stop Mansionization Now! If the ACC and the Board allow the proposed changes to 500 Change Court, monster mansions will spring forth round our park and through out our Bluffington Haven. Ten years from now we will wake and not know where we are. Stop Mansionization Here and Now!

Tessie Payne,  
for the BHSMN committee

Dear Tessie,

It is ten years later and you seem to have sent me the wrong broadside. I presume you mean this to be a request for a community meeting.

your friend,  
Guy Chambers

3.

Dear Neighbor Chambers:

The Declaration of Independence holds two great rights: 1. that all men are created equal in their pursuit of Life, Liberty and Happiness and 2. when government no longer serves the people, then the people must dissolve government and institute new. From out of the stirring loins of this great document grew one great nation under God ruled by laws that protect and defend each citizen's rights to own and improve their own private property. I stand with Noah Rothman in his fight to dissolve the Bluffington Haven HOA and institute new government of the people and by the people. The Bluffington Haven HOA Covenants are the evil spawn of Communist Spies who like seventeen year locusts dug deep into the great U.S.A.'s free housing market, every American's dream to own his own home, and left behind time bombs, bombs among us, waiting, waiting, to crawl to the surface and blow up our homes and offices and factories and buses, too late to build bomb shelters, as it seems our good and brave neighbor Noah Rothman is valiantly building. I hope he has already bought his weapons. Stand Forth Minute Men! Don't Shoot Until You See the Whites or the Browns of the Terrorists' Eyes. Yes, I tied a yellow ribbon round every dying pin oak tree. God Bless America! Free Iraq! Build for Freedom, Noah Rothman. I, George I. Joseph stand tall with you!

George I. Joseph,  
1776 Cold Spring Court

P.S. Good Neighbor Rothman's hammering seems to have reduced our pond's geese population and their muck on the path around the pond. I would have shot them for you years ago! When a different drummer calls us to glory down the road less traveled, put up or shut up! Never up, never in!

The geese, George, have left us, I hope, temporarily.

4.

I have it on good authority that before moving to Bluffington Haven, Noah Rothman owned Pluto's Retreat, NYC, and was a pornographer, and Mrs. Rothman one of the girls in his stable, and now I'm told he's building a sex club in his back yard just feet from the park path. Hello, there're no windows! Our innocent children hearing the moans and grunts of the rutting swingers as they....just yesterday, I saw those two men who live across the street from Rothman helping him and yes, their house's always neat as pin but they should take their life style somewhere else and the three of them building benches and stalls and bringing in hay, ha! a different theme each night barn one night, wild west the next, Lady Godiva riding around our pond eating chocolate! And curtains, I saw velvet curtains...and...yes, that's what they're doing, building a theatre, a porn theatre, right here, live sex shows in Bluffington Haven, women and men with whips and leather, lap dances! We the proud owners on Willow Stream Lane have met and we'll take action. We'll drive sin from among us.