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THT announces an 'In the Wings' staged reading of Anna Ziegler's 'Boy'

Submitted by Susan Evans



Top, from left: Craig Souza and Craig Eychner; bottom: Alan Coyne, Gretchen Lee Salter and Adrian Deane. Photo provided

Next up in Town Hall Theatre's staged reading series "In the Wings" is a one-night only reading of "Boy," a moving new play about gender identity by Anna Ziegler. "Boy" will have one performance only on Feb. 4 at Town Hall Theatre Company in Lafayette.

The true story of David Peter Reimer was the playwright's inspiration for "Boy." In 1966 Reimer suffered a botched circumcision as an infant; on the advice of psychologist and gender identity specialist John Money, Reimer's parents raised him as a girl. At age 14, learning of his past from his father, Reimer decided to accept a male identity. But Reimer's actual story serves only as a jumping off point for the playwright. "Boy" focuses in on the complicated inter-dependent relationship between a doctor and a patient; and Ziegler is most interested in how parents can be blinded by love to the true needs of their children.

The choice Adam's parents make reverberates throughout this life. Scenes in the play bounce back and forth from the 1960s to the 1980s: Adam's parents ask the advice of a psychologist after a surgical accident has

left one of their twin boys without a penis; Adam is `trained' in being a girl as we witness many childhood appointments in a doctor's office; Adam finds love as a young man in his 20s. What's it like to grow up in an identity that doesn't fit you?

"Boy" is directed by Cynthia Lagodzinski and features five talented Bay Area performers: Alan Coyne, Adrian Deane, Craig Eychner, Gretchen Lee Salter, and Craig Souza.

In an interview given before the play's world premiere, the playwright discussed the recurring themes of betrayal, forgiveness and the durability of love in her plays: "At the heart of the play is an incredible betrayal, stunning in its scope and consequences. That Adam can ultimately find a way to forgive his parents speaks to his gradual recognition that it was in fact love that drove their decision, and to all the characters' deep humanity and good intentions, however flawed."

Tickets are \$10 general admission and free to subscribers, and are available through the box office at (925) 283-1557 or online.

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