

## The Theatuh

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I was chatting by email last night with Stan Foote, director of the Oregon Children's Theater which produced my play "Gossamer" this past fall. Stan said he is currently working on a musical of CLICK CLACK MOO which will open with the farmer shoveling manure (while dancing and singing, I suppose) ; he said they were in the process of designing the manure: "insulation foam, sprayed with glossy brown paint and and a few dabs of green here and there to and add little contrast, they are pooptastic."

Ah, the splendor of theater.

Me, I am heading tomorrow to Kansas, where I will see the first producton of a musical based on my book "Gathering Blue." Since I didn't write this one, I have no idea how they went about it---what is left in, what was taken out---but at least we can be sure there will be no dancing cows. I can see in my mind what it would be like if I HAD written it---can visualize what I would have kept, and how the set would be designed (I know, I know, if I learned anything from doing one play, it is that the author doesn't design the set!) but of course everyone has different visions, and it will be fun to see what these people have done.

I have just signed the contract for film rights to "The Willoughbys" and though of course nine times out of ten, the film you sell an option for is never made, still it is fun thinking about that one, too, how it would be done. I picture Peter Ustinov (is he still alive?) playing Commander Melanoff ---or maybe, alternatively, Paul Giamatti---and let's see: how about Frances McDormand as the Nanny? It's always pointless to try to think of kids for roles because by the time the picture is actually made, the kids you thought of have have grown up.

Okay, instead of designing sets for a musical and casting a movie, I will turn my attention to my real work, the one thing I DO get to do: writing. I am plodding along too slowly on my current project, possibly because the plot--the main character, actually--- has entered a fish hatchery, and though I have done the necessary research and know, now, how to strip fish eggs and mix with milt (I once knew a guy named Milt. Wonder how he feels that his name also means fish sperm)--- frankly, it is not fascinating to me and that is probably why I am dragging my feet,

writing-wise.

Of course, if the writer finds something boring, then it is entirely likely that the reader will, too.p  
A a writer I am always aware of that.p I have to find a way to beef this scene up----oops; wrong  
metaphor, for a fish hatchery.p

Tags: Untagged