

Answer 4/11/74

April 2, 1974

Dear Mr. Knee,

I hope you will forgive me for the unconscionable delay in responding to your invitation to comment on your play, Santa Anita '42. I took it out with me on a vacation trip to California last month when I finally got an opportunity to read it, and then I re-read it this last weekend.

It would be presumptuous, I feel, for me to comment on a dramatic work since I have no expertise in this field. Additionally, Santa Anita '42 has enjoyed a measure of success and who am I to knock success?

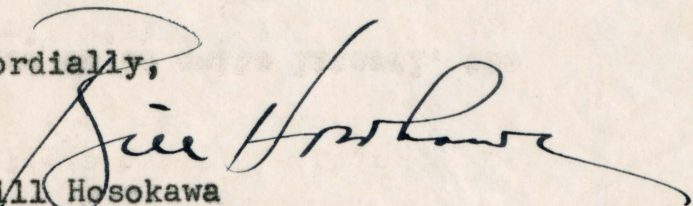
Nonetheless, I have some gut feelings about the play which I am relaying to you for whatever they may be worth.

For a person like myself, inclined to be quite literal, the play is somewhat abstruse. I could wish for a bit more specific references, a bit less in the way of allusions and symbolism. Perhaps, in the staging of the play, the lack of background which I feel is confusing, could be taken care of in a program note explaining what the Japanese American story is all about.

My second point has to do with a feeling that Tamako's affair with Paul, allegorical as it may be, doesn't quite ring true. While it is altogether likely that many married Issei women may have had affairs with Caucasian men, most of their extramarital experiences were with Japanese men. For me, this affair would be more believable if Tamako had an American-born daughter who would be attracted to Paul and all that he symbolizes.

I want to emphasize the point these are the reactions of one who has no experience in the field of drama and may have little validity. Nonetheless, the time is ripe for telling the Japanese American story in a variety of ways, and I wish you much success with Santa Anita '42.

Cordially,

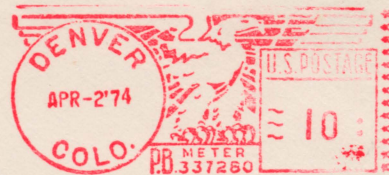
  
Bill Hosokawa

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