

" T H E C A T "

An Original Portuguese

Play By

HENRIQUE SANTANA

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" O G A T O "

(THE CAT)

From: Gordon Marsters

Subject: THE CAT

It is my pleasure to present the popular Portuguese Playright, Henrique Santana, whose comedies have appeared in Portugal and other countries for the past twenty years. He is also an actor and director, and he is currently appearing in his own musical comedy with a cast of eighty. Santana desires to introduce his plays to the American audiences beginning with THE CAT, and he also hopes to arrange for American comedies to be shown in Portugal. The American Cultural Center is planning to invite Santana to visit the USA.

THE CAT was first performed in Lisbon in 1963. It has a cast of eleven and ran for two years including performances in Brussels, France, Mozambique and Angola. It was also filmed for the Portuguese television.

This is a fantasy-comedy of two acts and two-hours duration. It uses the French Molière opening. The Prologue is performed in an unusual manner as the plot is unfolded and the cast introduced. It ends with an Oscar Wilde short story on fantasy.

As the first act begins, the action takes place in the living room of Aunt Carlota. The cat, Pi-Pi, because of a Chinese saying and the wishing of Aunt Carlota, is transformed into her favorite nephew Carlos who has been missing in Africa for five years. Castro the Banker, his wife Maria and two daughters, Teresa and Joanna, are visiting Aunt Carlota. Teresa is engaged to Carlos but her father is going to terminate the engagement unless Carlos returns in one week. Joanna's boyfriend is Toni, and there is Romualdo, rich, proper and timid who is pursuing the attentions of Teresa. Prof. Novais is a neighbor and counselor of Aunt Carlota. Laura Barradas, whose husband works for Carlos in Africa, arrives unexpectedly to tell them about Carlos' activities. Amelia the maid, is generally confused about everything.

The problem is that Pi-Pi, now in human form, still knows he's a cat. An unbelieving Prof. Novais is convinced by Aunt Carlota that her cat was actually transformed, and together they try to instruct Pi-Pi how to act in order to convince the others that he is the real Carlos and thereby save the engagement of Teresa.

But Pi-Pi is unpredictable. He still likes to visit his girlfriend Nana on the neighbor's roof, plays with his ball on the floor, fishes for the goldfish, drinks his milk from a saucer, gets confused with his instructions and thinks that all humans are irrational.

Subject: THE CAT

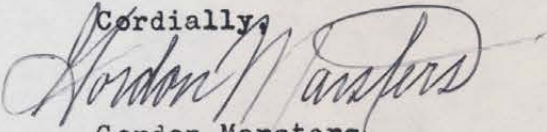
A few of the highlights are:

Pi-Pi's entrance speech upon his supposed arrival from Africa.
His description of hunting for rhinoceros.
An affectionate scene on the floor by Pi-Pi and Teresa.
Prof. Novais in pajamas getting caught in Aunt Carlota's bedroom.
Pi-Pi and Teresa have a big fight over a girlfriend named Cheetah.
The explanation of an African hunt with the Homos.

The Professor advises the others that Pi-Pi has a jungle fever called "Catphilia" to account for his strange behavior. Eventually the real Carlos returns but Aunt Carlota and Prof. Novais still think he is Pi-Pi and more comedy results. One night Pi-Pi slips off the roof while going to visit Nana and changes back into a cat. Finally everyone is convinced the real Carlos has returned as he makes the same entrance speech that Pi-Pi did in Act I.

Santana feels THE CAT would also make a good TV show and also as a motion picture.

Both the Portuguese original and the English adaptation have been copyrighted. I am the translator and have received full authorization from Henrique Santana and SPA SOCIEDADE PORTUGUESE DE AUTORES for its production.

Cordially,

Gordon Marsters



SOCIEDADE PORTUGUESA DE AUTORES

RB/MT

Lisbon, 25th May 1976

Mr. Gordon Carr Marsters
3617, Manhattan Street
SEAFORD, NEW YORK, 11783

Dear Mr. Marsters,

According to our member Mr. Henrique Santana's wish we are pleased to give you authorization for doing business with the staging of his play "O GATO" which will be, however, when necessary, object of an agreement passed by us and according to your orders.

You may also achieve on behalf of the author any copyright registration which may be under the obligation of the Law in the U.S.A.

With our best regards,

Yours sincerely,

Rogério Bracinha



SOCIEDADE PORTUGUESA DE AUTORES

RB/MT

Lisbon, 16th June 1976

THE DRAMATIC GUILD, INC.
Six East Thirty-Nine Street
NEW YORK, N.Y. 10016

Gentlemen:

We have the pleasure in introducing to you Mr. Gordon Carr Marsters, who represents our distinguished member Mr. Henrique Santana, a Portuguese playwright with a large production record.

The bearer of this letter has the credentials for that and is in charge of making business with the staging rights of the play "O GATO" by our member Mr. Henrique Santana. Under these circumstances, we would appreciate your best attention for him and the matter concerned.

Thanking you in advance for your favourable reception, we are,

Very truly yours,

Rogério Bracinha

" T H E C A T "

A FANTASY-COMEDY IN TWO ACTS

By

HENRIQUE SANTANA

ENGLISH TRANSLATION AND ADAPTATION

By

GORDON MARSTERS

HENRIQUE SANTANA

... has been for the past twenty years the largest theatrical producer in Portugal. His plays have received outstanding commercial success not only in Portugal but also in Spain, Brazil, Belgium, Angola, Argentina and in Mozambique.

Plays such as, THE CAT, A GHOST NAMED ISABEL, LOVE '68, THREE ON A HONEYMOON, AN OLD WOMAN FELL FROM THE SKY, THE ELEPHANTS CAN'T FEEL THE FLEAS, and many others, have been much talked about. Santana's plays have received various awards. He is also an actor and director, and is currently appearing in his own musical comedy, THE CARNIVAL DRUM, with a cast of eighty. Several of his plays were also produced for television.

It gives me a great pleasure to present this original playright to the American audiences.

GORDON MARSTERS

Dedicated to my beloved father who during
his lifetime, brought so much happiness
and laughter into the hearts of the people.

Henrique Santana

THE CAST

THE CAT - Pi-Pi
andPlayed by the same person
CARLOS
AUNT CARLOTACarlos' aunt
PROFESSOR NOVAISProfessor of psychology and psychiatry
MARIA CASTROWife of Antonio Castro
ANTONIO CASTROBanker
TERESAThe Castro's daughter and fiancée of Carlos
JOANNAYoungest daughter of the Castros
TONIFiancé of Joanna
EUFEMIA/ AMELIA !?The maid
ROMUALDOTeresa's suitor
LAURA BARRADASFriend of Carlos from Africa

P R O L O G U E

The first Molière beats are heard, and the curtain goes up in complete darkness. A spotlight is suddenly turned on Carlos who is standing in the center of the orchestra leaning on the bannister and facing the audience. Still in the darkness and standing posed in the center of the stage are Professor Novais who has just arrived, and Amelia, the maid, holding his hat and coat. At the left of the stage Aunt Carlota is sitting holding Pi-Pi the cat on her lap and standing by her side is Teresa crying and holding a handkerchief in her hand. At the right side of the stage are standing Antonio Castro, the banker, his wife, Maria, their younger daughter Joanna and her fiancé, Toni.

CARLOS

(Speaking to the audience) Good evening ladies and gentlemen. At this very moment the play begins and we in the cast ask you to relax and enjoy yourselves with us...with indulgence. As we are creating for your pleasure a world of fantasy and imagination. So take off your glasses of reality and truth and come with us into the land of make-believe where dreams and nonsense are but the explorations of your mind. Yet when we are dreaming, everything seems possible, and we the comedians are nothing else but the sellers of dreams. Tonight, we are selling a fantastic and unbelievable story. We will begin with scene 7, eliminating the usual dull opening scenes where the maid always starts talking to a family friend who has just arrived, and then other members of the cast appear telling the rest of the plot. Today...no. As I imagine you have already put on your glasses of fantasy and imagination, we are going to begin in another way...Excuse me, (Speaking toward the stage) Electrician, light No. 2. (A spotlight illuminates Prof. Novais and Amelia, the maid.) This is the maid... a typical maid looking like every other one. Well...not all of them are so...pretty, but once again, since you have already put on your glasses of imagination, all maids look like her. (To the maid)...Your name is Eufemia, isn't it?

AMELIA

(Breaking her pose) Eufemia, yes sir.

CARLOS

Eufemia is a horrible name. What should we call you? What?...Perhaps...

FIGURANT

(From the audience) Amelia...

CARLOS

That's better...and a pretty name...and more simple...From now on you will be Amelia.

AMELIA

Amelia...yes sir. But in the first scene with the professor, I....

CARLOS

The scene was cut. I arranged with the audience tonight to begin with the 7th scene.

NOVAIS

(Breaking his pose) I'm sorry but I don't agree. This was my important scene where I defined my part. In my quality as a family friend when psychologically I

CARLOS

Let's not discuss it, Prof. Novais. If it was cut by censor, we wouldn't have it anyway, would we? All right? (Turns to the audience) This gentleman is a professor of psychology, and ...

NOVAIS

Psychiatry...I'm a friend of Aunt Carlota, the owner of this apartment. You certainly know what a psychiatrist is, don't you?

CARLOS

Naturally...A psychiatrist is the last person we talk to before we start talking to ourselves.

NOVAIS

Oh...(The spotlight on Prof. Novais is suddenly turned out).

CARLOS

Light No. 3...(A spotlight is turned on Aunt Carlota, the cat and Teresa)
This lady is aunt Carlota. The cat she has on her lap is the leading figure in this play and its name is Pi-Pi, and the one standing beside them is Teresa. (Speaking to them) I want to introduce you to our audience tonight.

CARLOTA

It's a pleasure and good evening.

TERESA

Good evening.

CARLOS

As we are beginning with scene 7, we should inform our audience about your mood in scene 8.

CARLOTA

Of course. You're going to find us very worried because it will soon be five years since my nephew Carlos disappeared in the African jungle.

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...We haven't had any news from him and if he doesn't come back in one week's time, the parents of the fiancée Teresa, will cancel the engagement.

TERESA

(Crying comically) Poor dear...I promised to wait for him but my father wants me to marry Romualdo. (Cries harder)

CARLOTA

(Like a secret to the audience) Her parents are such brutes. They have no feelings.

MARIA

(Group begins speaking. Protesting and still standing in the dark.) This isn't right. The way they're talking the worst parts are for us.

CASTRO

(Nervously, also in the dark)...Light No. 4 please. (Spotlight is turned on them. He speaks to the audience.)...I apologize for interrupting but I want to clear things up. First of all, good evening. I am the banker, Antonio Castro and this is my wife, Maria, and my younger daughter Joanna. This is the situation. My other daughter Teresa, that one(pointing) was about to marry Carlos but his position was not compatible with our social status.

MARIA

And I myself persuaded my husband to advance Carlos some money to try a business venture in Africa.

CASTRO

And I, with all good intentions, lent him the money. Carlos left and never came back nor sent us any news...nothing...is it my fault?

MARIA

And the poor girl can't wait for him all her life.

JOANNA

And Toni and I want to get married also.

MARIA

Don't be in a hurry, dear. First your father must find him a position.

TONI

But I don't want to go to Africa too.

CASTRO

(In a strong voice)...Keep quiet. You'll go where I tell you. (To the audience) Forgive me...I planned to spend some time in town with Aunt Carlota in order to make up my mind, and I have. If Carlos doesn't show up in another week, the engagement is over and she marries someone else. That's final.

TERESA

(Crying) Ah.....

MARIA

(To Castro) Are you listening?

CASTRO

Yes... the girl has been influenced by Carlota. That... that stupid woman.

CARLOTA

That stupid woman am I... you... you... loan shark... you

CARLOS

(Emotionally) Lights out please. (Darkness and silence on the scene) I'm sorry. I thought it better to put out the lights as our conversation was about to lose its necessary level. These are the characters who would have taken part up to scene seven. Oh... and Carlos, the one who went to Africa... it's me. From now on you are going to travel with us into the land of make believe. Oscar Wilde proved in one of his short stories that only fantasy is worth being told. This may remind you. Once upon a time, there was a man who was revered in his village because he knew how to tell stories. In the evening after the day's work the peasants would gather around him and ask: (Curtain slowly begins to close)

- Tell us... what did you see today?

And the man who was very wise used to tell:

- I saw in the forest a fawn playing on a magic flute a melody as wonderful as the wind.

- Tell us more. What else did you see?

And he would continue:

- When I came near the seashore I saw on the crest of a wave three mermaids combing their long green hair with golden combs. And the peasants liked him because he was a wise man... and artist and because he knew how to tell stories.

One fine morning the wise man left the village as usual. Near the seashore he did see three mermaids combing their long green hair with golden combs. Very surprised, he went on and saw a fawn playing on a magic flute. That night when he went back to the village, he was asked as usual:

- Tell us... what did you see today?

As he was a wise man as well as an artist, he would answer:

- Today I saw nothing...

Sorry, I ask you to forgive us for this introduction. Let's begin the show with confidence because tonight we are fortunate enough to have with us an audience of wise people and artists.