

ADY
by Rhiana Yazzie

About the play (from playwright's website):

Ady is the story of a Navajo woman, Adrienne, who finds a 1937 photograph of a Caribbean dancer that is her mirror image. This opens the door to a moment before WWII when the surrealist movement was blooming. Characters like Pablo Picasso and his lover, Dora Marr, surrealist photographers like Man Ray and Lee Miller guide Adrienne through her mother's suicide back home on the reservation. As it tells the story of a surrealist muse, the play shows how easy it is to be lost to history, especially if you were a little brown woman.

NOTE: This excerpt is made available for Playwrights' Center auditions ONLY. Any other sharing, copying, distributing, or other use is prohibited.

ADRIENNE – F, any age, Native American. A young Navajo woman dealing with the aftermath of her mother's suicide

About this scene:

At the beginning of the play, Adrienne is remembering what it was like to move off of the reservation where she grew up.

ADRIENNE

I moved far enough away that when people found out I was Indian they would be surprised, delighted, interested.

But I noticed more and more that I had to fix things about myself that didn't work in that world I'd moved to. I quickly learned to interact in the way all the other people did. I learned to small talk and to do my hair right, and to hug.

To hug people I didn't even know. Sometimes to kiss on the face or to be kissed on the face by people I did not even know and then give the great impression that I was happy with this interaction. That I enjoyed it.

And of course to shake hands hard. To grab a hand and to let my hand be shaken hard. Looking everyone in the eye is a sign of respect. Touching strangers is a sign of respect. Allowing them to touch you too, is a sign of respect.

So there was something in me that, was broken. Something just wasn't working mechanically with all these things and people. Even other Indians who say they're Indian but still were holding me to these standards . . . and don't know that Navajos don't shake hands hard because it's a very intimate gesture.

You feel the temperature of another person and they feel yours and you take just a little bit of them and they take just a little bit of you.

You don't do that with just anyone.

So sometimes, I kinda just have to . . . think, when I see people taking and giving themselves away like that, and not even know it.