

'THE STORYTELLING ABILITY OF A BOY'

By Carter W. Lewis;

presented by Center
Repertory Company

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STORYTELLING ABILITY OF A BOY

A Funny, Emotional Look at Young People and Love

Some people are in closer touch with their adolescent angst than others.

Playwright Carter W. Lewis seems intimately acquainted with his teenaged self, judging by "The Storytelling Ability of a Boy," enjoying a world premiere run through Jan. 17 at Florida Stage, 262 S. Ocean Blvd., Manalapan.

We can only speculate on what autobiographical details might be in any work of fiction, but the playwright admitted to me he was a brainy kid, and obviously he is a consummate storyteller, with a poet's gift of vivid language.

The storyteller of the title is Peck (Marshall Paillet), a self-professed outsider with only one close friend.

She is fellow outsider Dora, a rebellious, potty-mouthed iconoclast in search of emotional engagement.

Their English teacher and mentor Caitlin (Laura Carbonell) is only a decade older than her students and still in a state of flux.

Recently divorced, Caitlin has fled from an abusive husband and is trying to get a new start in an unnamed Midwestern town.

Much of the beauty of "Storyteller" comes from the prose of Peck, who sees ordinary things in most extraordinary ways.

Because he is smart, not a jock and stand-offish, Peck is the butt of jokes and the target of bullies.

Dora is his fierce defender- a "Tomboy" in the best sense of the word- and Caitlin quickly joins the cause when certain incidents provoke violence.

The reality of adolescence is that it is a scary period; uncertain and an often violent time. Anyone who says otherwise has led a charmed life or is just not being realistic.

What Carter and his superb cast have accomplished is to make a thing of beauty out of the very things we fear and that may hurt us. "Storyteller" is at times harsh and profane, but so is life.

This, ladies and gentlemen, this is the real deal. I urge you to consider this fascinating, compelling play, performed quickly and without intermission under the incisive, compassionate direction of Louis Tyrrell. I do not think you

will be disappointed.

Tickets are \$45 and \$48. Call (800) 514-3837 or visit

Aurora Theatre/Atlanta