

Production Notes

From the Director **Kristin Kundert-Gibbs**

The Life and Times of Tulsa Lovechild: A True Story

In 2003, I saw a production of *The Life and Times of Tulsa Lovechild: A Road Trip* at the Warehouse Theatre in Greenville, South Carolina. I left the theatre with this uncanny feeling that I knew Tulsa. It wasn't merely that I understood the character and her journey but that Tulsa Lovechild was a living, breathing human being who I knew personally. Now most people would chalk this up to good playwriting, but I was absolutely convinced that I knew Tulsa. So I did some investigating into the playwright, Greg Owens.

It is commonly known that playwrights write what they know and sometimes even who they know. So I thought that if I uncovered the life and times of Greg Owens, I might reveal the true identity of Tulsa Lovechild. Well—lo and behold—I did.

Although Greg and I had never met, the paths of our lives had crossed at several points, and we knew many of the same people, including Tulsa Lovechild. Of course her name wasn't/ isn't Tulsa, but the character was and is a real, breathing human being, a person I knew well, and who I even taught at one point years ago. Thus I know Tulsa, as well as Sylvia, her mother, who exists as well. In fact many of those crazy characters that populate the text are reflections of unique individuals that have passed through a very unique Mid-western town, a town that I once lived in, and I cherish the memory of my time there very deeply.

So is *The Life and Times of Tulsa Lovechild: A Road Trip* a true story? Well, of course not. But the journey that Tulsa takes is real. Tulsa and many people living in the world today, myself included, struggle with how to hold onto their values, make a living, and raise a family in a world that seems to be coming apart at the seams. In the play, Tulsa and the other characters discover that the best way to accomplish this herculean task is to follow the heart. Let love lead the way.

So all of us who are involved with this production of *Tulsa* wish to all of you who are here today a road trip navigated with the heart and a life filled with love. Peace.

