

Talent Manly Pursuits

Charles Busch has stared down a number of challenges in the last few years. He wrote his first novel (*Whores of Lost Atlantis*), made his cabaret debut, and tried and tried to write an animated musical (*Pygmalion* set in ancient Egypt) for Disney. "After I failed the first time," says Busch, "they said I was writing too juvenile; they wanted me to be Charles Busch." Now the man best known for outrageously camping it up in drag for shows like *Vampire Lesbians of Sodom* and *Psycho Beach Party* is facing his biggest challenge: playing a man. In *You Should Be So Lucky*, Busch plays a sweet, unassuming West Village electrolysisist. It's a modern spin on *Cinderella*. How did



Busch prepare for the role? "I did a great

deal of research on men," he deadpans. The real difficulty, says Busch, is toning down his own over-the-top mannerisms, the same ones that make playing females based on Stanwyck and Crawford so utterly natural. "It's very hard just being human because I tend to *move* like I'm in an old movie," says Busch. "I'm just very stylized." But aren't men's clothes, at least, more comfortable? "They're *boring*," he moans. "All the women in the show get to wear very, very chic high-fashion clothes. My next show I'm going to be wearing the most glamorous drag you ever saw. I don't like being stripped of glamour." MICHAEL GILTZ

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Waterman as Horner. \$24. Thurs.–Sat. at 8; Sun. at 3. Through 12/18. *Bouwerie Lane Theatre*, 330 Bowery (677-0060).

Family Secrets—A one-woman comedy with Sher-

Mother—show Mines hood