

# Antaeus Theatre Co. will stage Harold Pinter's obscure comedy 'The Hothouse'



The Antaeus Theatre Co. is staging Harold Pinter's "The Hothouse," starring Peter Van Norden and Jocelyn Towne, through Mar. 11. (Courtesy of Geoffrey Wade Photography)



By **Jeff Landa**

JANUARY 9, 2018, 7:40 PM

**I**n a play that examines the absurdity of bureaucracy in a government-run facility, Antaeus Theatre Co. will present Harold Pinter's black comedy "The Hothouse" beginning Jan. 18 through March 11.

The play was originally written in 1953 but went unproduced for decades after a string of poorly received plays by Pinter caused the playwright to shelf the project until 1980.

“The Hothouse” is set in a mental institution, where its primary administrator, Root, is faced with a Christmas Day crisis of solving the death of one patient and the impregnation of another.

The escapades of the caretakers under the iron fist of Root are used to illustrate the problems with power.

“It shows what a bad organizational environment can do to people. When there’s a bad leader, it infects everybody,” said Nike Doukas, the play’s director. “Root manages to do it in a way that’s extremely funny, but it can get very dark and scary at moments.”

Doukas, who has been with Antaeus Theatre Co. since its second year of being founded in 1991, said she is primarily an actor, but has since moved into directing and was looking for a play that is relevant to current events.

The Antaeus Theatre Co., which opened in Glendale early last year, uses a partner-cast system, where each role is cast with two actors, Doukas said.

“I would recommend that all come and see it twice. The different cast members show how much a cast contributes to each production,” she said. “Both cast members can agree on every point of their shared role and still make their performance feel very different.”

“The Hothouse” is being presented in the theater’s Kiki & David Gindler Performing Arts Center, 110 E. Broadway, Glendale.

For more information, visit [antaeus.org](http://antaeus.org)

[jeff.landa@latimes.com](mailto:jeff.landa@latimes.com)

**Twitter: @JeffLanda**

Copyright © 2018, Glendale News-Press