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Theatre Review > "THE BELLFLOWER SESSIONS" now playing at the Whitefire Theatre

Written by Cathy Wayne

The Whitefire Theatre presents

THE BELLFLOWER SESSIONS



The World Premiere of THE BELLFLOWER SESSIONS a play in two acts

Written by Andy Bloch

Directed by Bryan Rasmussen

Produced by Scott Disharoon

The Whitefire Theatre's 30th Anniversary Season brings us the World Premiere Play **THE BELLFLOWER SESSIONS**, a new black comedy written by Andy Bloch and directed by Bryan Rasmussen. Comedy proves to be the most logical format for insanity, giving us an evening filled with laughs that provide comic relief through the pain and misery of losing everything that is most important to us. It is extremely funny, at times raw and coarse, and finally, intensely disturbing all at the same time.

What pushes someone to the edge? How totally lost must you be to feel complete desperation? Jack Calvin is the self-proclaimed victim of the recession. Rob Nagle is fantastic as Jack, and brings us to the pinnacle of total anguish, showing us the torment of loss, and the inability to bring himself out of the darkness. Jack's wife, Molly (Marshelle Fair) is being emotionally supported and encouraged by friend Derek (Kevin Benton) who has personal issues of his own. She tries to encourage Jack to seek help and to try to get back on his feet, but sees he is incapable of taking any useful advice, and decides there is "no tomorrow" in their future. This devastates Jack pushing him further into that point of no return.

Jack turns to his foul-mouthed friend Grant, wonderfully performed by Michael Monks. Grant is the proverbial jerk, and their banter is peppered with graphic sexual details and general male competitiveness. Grant refers him to his therapist, but is emphatic that Jack not tell the doctor that he has referred him to her. Enter Dr. Wendy Bellflower, performed by the talented Stephanie Erb. She manipulates her clients convincing them of their incompetence and pushing them toward their inevitable demise. She is not your standard therapist, or is she? Hopefully, none of us ever have to go to someone like Dr. Bellflower for help. She is the ultimate nut-case.

Andy Block has given us a thought provoking script with insight into how quickly we can lose ourselves without human support and compassion. The Jack Calvin character talks himself into his inability to move out of his pain. The more one talks about how "incapable or unable" we are, the more we are incapable or unable to do what we need to do to get us out of our situation. Director Bryan Rasmussen highlights that point where we just lose it. We are given a bird's eye view of what can happen if we do not conquer life's daily ups and downs. Set Design, Lighting, Sound, etc., all support this wonderful production.



Over the past few years, many of us have felt the effects of the recession. You will feel uncomfortable in your seats watching Jack completely fall apart. You will identify with how our society forces us to accept daily annoyances and injustices. And, you will leave this play with your mind hopeful that you will never be in such a painful situation. Thankfully, most of us never will be, but will find the strength to move forward when we are faced with life changes and challenges.

Enjoy!!!!!!

Cast: Kevin Benton, Stephanie Erb, Marshelle Fair, Michael Monks, Rob Nagle

Director: Bryan Rasmussen

Producer: Scott Disharoon

Set Design: John Burton

Light Design: Derrick McDaniel

Sound Design: Ryan Vig

Costume Design: Paige Russell

Casting: Ricki G. Maslar, CSA

Fight Choreographer: Brian Danner

Stage Manager: Carole Ursetti

House Manager: Neda Gajeh-Tae

Public Relations: Nora Feldman

Graphic Design: Lexilu

Warnings: Adult themes, adult language, sexual situations, gunshots

The Whitefire Theatre

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