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**Visceral DANNY Will Make You Fall In Love**

DANNY AND THE DEEP BLUE SEA

Run dates: 11/20/2008 – 11/30/2008

See it:  
 730pm, Saturday, November 22  
 230pm, Sunday, November 23  
 730pm, Friday, November 28  
 730pm, Saturday, November 29  
 230pm, Sunday, November 30

The Curtainbox Theater Company  
 at the Village Theatre, Village of East Davenport, Iowa

[www.thecurtainbox.com](http://www.thecurtainbox.com)  
 563-650-8121

Tickets \$15

Running time: 1 hour and 15 minutes, with no intermission

The Curtainbox Theater Company's production of DANNY AND THE DEEP BLUE SEA, currently playing at the Village Theatre, reminded me of the days when theater's magic first stunned me with its power – and is the perfect example of why I am still in its thrall.

The attraction may have been begun with the beauty of Shakespeare's language, and was sustained for a while by the flash and glitz of musicals, but it was the intensity and intimacy and raw emotion of black box-style theater that sealed the deal. Nowhere else can you get quite the same kind of immediacy and naked feeling and hard-hitting simplicity – the completely visceral experience – that is the essence of theater.

This DANNY, directed by Daniel DP Sheridan, is minimalist in its staging (though not lacking any essential elements) and is chockfull of the in-your-face blast of stunningly complex and utterly natural acting that is so completely satisfying to experience.

Eddie Staver III has the title role here, and he subsumes himself into the character to an amazing degree. As Danny, a young and angry truck driver whose violence threatens to consume him, Staver is absolutely awesome. You see the anesthetic lack of emotion and mindlessness that have characterized Danny for so long – a massive cavern of emptiness so deep and dark that it appears endless – and Staver's work lets us experience it through Danny's every gesture and facial movement. It is a raw yet richly-textured portrayal that proves jaw-droppingly real, and when a glimmer of hope sparks, Danny's simple approach to joy is a thing of total beauty.

Kimberly Furness is pretty amazing here, too, lending her character (the damaged and stressed Roberta) a tense fragility that has a few brittle edges. While she physically is a little less submerged into the role – hair and skin a little too glossy, with a costume that shows arms more toned than a distracted Roberta would ever have time for – Furness (who also co-produced DANNY) gives the role plenty of zigzagging emotional authenticity.

The resulting combination of the two performances is powerful, showcasing terrific actors who know exactly what to do with John Patrick Shanley's superb script.

Sheridan and the two actors have done beyond-fine work, and they are not alone. The expert craft onstage is enhanced with beautiful lighting design of David Furness (who also co-produced), and Joseph T. Janz III has created a great sound design that evokes just the right mood for this amazing show.

Simply too good to miss, this DANNY AND THE DEEP BLUE SEA is the kind of theater you just have to see. If you don't already love theater the way I do, you will by the time this well-paced show reaches its complex final moments.

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