

On Review with Thom White

WQAD's Thom White offers his thoughts on movies, television shows and local theater productions

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It took just one performance, Danny and the Deep Blue Sea, for me to fall in love with The Curtainbox Theatre Company. It could be the company's lack of fear of exceptional writing laced with mature themes. It could be the quality of the production. Or, it could be because I adore co-founding member Kim Furness so much. Or, it could be a combination of all of these and then some.

The Curtainbox is currently running Glengarry Glen Ross, David Mamet's most honored play. And, it deserves it. By that I mean the play deserves the accolades. And, The Curtainbox deserves to take on such an intense, well-written, funny, exceptional piece of theater.

Glengarry Glen Ross centers around a real estate agency with new orders to increase sales or people are getting pink slips. In order to avoid the unemployment line, the salesmen must sell something. In order to sell something, they need leads. But, they can only get the good leads if they sell something. With such a daunting task, a couple of them plot to break in to the office and steal the leads to sell them to a rival company.

The strongest piece of The Curtainbox Theatre's production is unarguably its pacing. This ensemble cast, under the obviously capable direction of David Bonde, has the pacing down to a "T", which adds even more punch to Mamet's clever script. The words could hold up to a lesser performance as notable. But, this is not a lesser performance, adding punch to the way Mamet plays with words and creating an altogether exciting, riveting and laugh-inducing experience.

The cast's pacing is the star of this production, but only because it has a capable supporting cast.

And I have to mention to opening scene of each act, each of which include no dialogue, but an appropriate song to add a bit of silliness to the scene on stage to giddily amusing affect. These scenes alone are worth the price of admission.

A warning, though. Don't let the girl in the pigtails taking tickets at the front door fool you. Her youthfulness is not representative of the mature themes of this show. Mamet is known for his sometimes vulgar language. And, there's plenty of it in this play. That's not to dissuade you from going. I absolutely think you should go to experience such exceptional theater. Just leave any children with a single digit to their age with a babysitter.

Glengarry Glen Ross runs September 18-19, 22 and 24-26 at 7:30 p.m. and September 20 and 27 at 3:00 p.m. at the Village Theatre in the Village of East Davenport. Tickets are \$15 and can be reserved by calling The Curtainbox Ticket Line at (563) 650-8121 or by emailing your reservation request to reservations@thecurtainbox.com. Or, if you're lucky and there are any left, they can be purchased at the door.

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