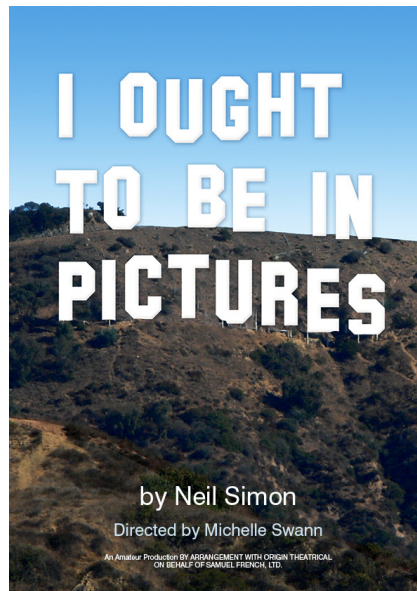


I Ought To Be In Pictures

Our production of the comedy, *I Ought To Be In Pictures*, kicked off on Thursday 24th March. We would like to thank Amnesty International and Kiwanis who attended our Charity preview last night for their enthusiasm and support. It's encouraging to see more and more people turn up to live theatre. Audiences love it - and so do the actors!



Our season runs until April 9th. You can get your tickets either at the door, by email, or online.

I Ought To Be In Pictures is written by Neil Simon, and directed for Peridot by Michelle Swann.

A Review of *I Ought To Be In Pictures*

I Ought To Be In Pictures

by Neil Simon

Peridot Theatre

Directed by Michelle Swann

Reviewed by Ken Barnes – 27 March 2022 (matinee)

As you know, Neil Simon is a celebrated writer, partly noted for his nuanced approach to human relationships and family life in all their tortuous forms – love, hate, misunderstandings – often with a mixture of comedy and pathos. In *I Ought to be in Pictures* the writer focuses on the lives of three Americans: Herb, who split with his wife 16 years ago, his girlfriend Steffy who visits for a passionate encounter once a week, and his 19-year-old daughter Libby who suddenly reappears and makes dramatic changes to Herb's life.

Andrew McAliece is an actor whose performances I have enjoyed in the past, and this was no exception. As Herb, he played a basically decent fellow but with a demanding life as a script-writer, plus other historical complexities which are brought to the surface by his interaction with the other characters. Andrew's articulation and projection were first rate and his nuanced movements and facial expressions certainly clicked with the audience.

His daughter Libby was played enthusiastically by Eva Hatzicostas, the feisty and seemingly confident daughter he had not seen since she was 3, but who suddenly reappears in his life. Libby's mannerisms and assertive delivery soon had us all glued to the stage because Eva was able to bring out that rough and tumble New York persona. Because the role quite often called for a fast-talking fusillade of words, I sometimes had trouble understanding their meaning; but that was Libby to a T.

In contrast, Steffy was calm and balanced; a role also extremely well played by Jeanne Snider. Her portrayal of the conciliatory, mature woman left us in no doubt that Jeanne was well-chosen for the part. Steffy was often the one who brought things together, notably in one of the poignant final scenes where Herb speaks to his ex-wife and estranged son on the telephone.

Interactions between the three characters were so realistic that at times one felt like yelling, "Stop this misunderstanding!" or "For pity's sake give her a hug!" Indeed, the subtle gestures, believable accents and each actor's ability to absorb his or her character all made the audience feel part of the story.

As usual with Peridot, the wide set was well-designed with furniture and props arranged appropriately, believable costumes, doors and a window to fit the story-line, changes to emphasise the different time periods and catchy music between scenes. The backstage crew were certainly on the ball.

Michelle Swann is certainly a talented director. She was able to bring out the writer's mix of humour and angst in a subtle way. She had assembled an equally impressive cast, each



actor conveying the colourful personality demanded of his or her role. It was a treat, and just what we needed in these gloomy times.

Ken Barnes

Vale Raleigh Robinson

Long time Peridot Patron and set builder Raleigh Robinson died in March after months of illness. Raleigh was 90.

In a quote from his lovely wife Barbara, "Don't be sad for him just remember all the wonderful times he had at Peridot and rejoice in all the enjoyment he had associated with the theatre and musical theatre in particular. He led a full life and was grateful that he was able to continue his involvement with Peridot until COVID put a spanner in the works. Who would have thought when we got together in our early 60's that we would last until our 90's. It has been a wonderful journey for both of us."

Raleigh's cheeky humour, set building expertise and mentoring will be missed. We extend our sincere condolences to Barbara and family.

A Review of *Hypnosis*

Hypnosis

By David Tristram

Peridot theatre Inc.

Directed by Pip LeBlond

Reviewed by Rod Nash – February 3rd, 2022

I attended Peridot's production in the first week of February and the impact of pandemic restrictions were very evident in the permitted size of the audience and its spread throughout the theatre. These limitations can have a marked impact on the audience and its reaction to a play such as *Hypnosis*.

Hypnosis is a farce which relies heavily on double entendre and twists and turns in the plot to entertain the audience. This is typical of many of David Tristram's plays. Tristram is one of the UK's most-performed comedy playwrights, with 28 published plays averaging around 1000 stage performances every year. The success of this play requires an energetic and disciplined cast, and an audience that appreciates the elements of a comedy farce.

Hypnosis revolves around the interaction between a down-and-out alcoholic hypnotist, Gordo Bywater (played by Michael Fenemore) and high ranking policeman, Alan Briggs (played by Andrew McIver). Mr Briggs is plucked out of the audience to participate in Gordo's hypnotist act – the twist and turns, which also involve Alan's wife Helen (played by Kate Bowers), start from here.

The initial set is a closed curtain with glitzy adornments – it represents a somewhat tawdry night club where you would expect to see a down-and-out hypnotist plying his trade. The major set, disclosed when the curtains open, represents the individual households both of Gordo and Briggs. The set contained elements of both the run-down abode belonging to Gordo and a more cared-for home belonging to the Briggs. Lighting was used cleverly to create other minor locations.

The FOH pre-play sound mix created a fun/party atmosphere. Dark menacing music was used (somewhat filmically) to underscore tense moments.

The cast were energetic and disciplined, and worked excellently as an ensemble. Michael gave us a Gordo that was confident, somewhat flashy and exotic – with a little bit of the alcoholic thrown in. Whilst Michael's performance was excellent, being consistent and entertaining, and at times vulnerable, I would be interested to see a little more of the alcoholic in the characterisation, particularly in his more one-on-one interactions with the other characters.

When first plucked out of the audience by the Hypnotist, Andrew McIver provided us with Mr Briggs as a somewhat innocent and put-upon character luring the audience into seeing him as a victim. He soon evolved into a threatening and desperate schemer. Another strong and consistent performance.

Kate played Alan's wife with a confident stage presence. She captured multiple aspects of the character; innocent, manipulative, scheming and coquettish. An entertaining performance.

With three excellent performances, and high production values, one would have expected the audience to be laughing along with the double entendres etc. The lines were delivered straight (as I would expect), not overdone as in a 'Carry On' film. The audience did not

react to them. Perhaps with a larger audience, in a party mood, the production would fly, as it deserves to do.

One Act Play Season for 2022

After a little shuffling about, and a possible cancellation, we are proud - and relieved! - to announce our One Act Play Seasons for 2022. This year, we're presenting four plays instead of the usual three. Please note that the OAPs will be performed at the Clayton Community Centre, as opposed to the Unicorn Theatre.

Clayton Theatre in the Clayton Community Centre, 9-15 Cooke Street, Clayton
Thursday June 2nd – Sunday June 5th
Four performances, including one Matinee on June 5th.

Line-Up by Steven Berkoff, directed by Joe Dias

A or B - Peter Tedford-Taylor

B or A - Gilbert Gauci

By arrangement with Origin Theatrical on behalf of Samuel French. A Concord Theatrical Company.

Love is a Dish by Adele Shelley, directed by Audrey Farthing

Beaux - Gavin Baker

Tally - Summer Bowen

By arrangement with the playwright Adele Shelley.

Embers by Natalie Burns directed by Colin Morley

Nowra - Gemma Tripp

Mudge - Jane Carter

Corry - Sarah Tierney

Mal - Carlotta Migliolo

Eden - Deborah Gaskin

Bay - Meg Davies

By arrangement with Maverick Musicals

Just a Straight Man by Rob Smith and John Mawson, directed by Bob Bramble

Trevor - Michael Moore

Barney - Martyn Jones

By arrangement with Play on Words.

What's On

A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder

MALVERN THEATRE CO. INC.

25 Mar 2022 - 8 Apr 2022

Present Laughter

HEIDELBERG THEATRE CO.

25 Mar 2022 - 9 Apr 2022

Mr. Bailey's Minder

THE 1812 THEATRE LTD.

31 Mar 2022 - 30 Apr 2022

It's Now Or Never

THE BASIN THEATRE GROUP INC.

21 Apr 2022 - 1 May 2022

The River

WILLIAMSTOWN LITTLE THEATRE INC.

20 Apr 2022 - 7 May 2022