

The Curtain Call: The Memory of Water

November 30, 2010 - Arts

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www.nexusnewspaper.com

The student newspaper of Camosun College, Victoria, BC

It's a testament to the quality of the production when a play can make you run the full gamut of emotions, from laughing to crying, with stops everywhere in between. The *Memory of Water* does just that.

Shelagh Stephenson has crafted an insightful and sharply written play about remembering, loss, and family. The performance reminded me of the whirlwind of emotions that accompanies the passing of a close family member.

The casting is fantastic, with Melissa Blank's memorable portrayal of Teresa being a highlight. Her performance as her uptight persona at the beginning of act one, which had me peg her as the responsible sister, is subtle and nuanced. But she steals the show during a drunken-rant scene that had me strongly consider that they may actually be drinking real alcohol on stage.

Blank's performance was certainly not the only highlight, as every performer has their moment to shine. From Lorene Cammiade as Mary, to Odile Nelson's portrayal of Catherine, all the sisters get adequate stage time to draw the audience into their roles. Even though Elizabeth Brimacombe's Vi character is deceased, she gets a powerful but subtle monologue about her last months with Alzheimer's that would make even the most stoic patron misty-eyed.

Mur Meadows as Mike and Rob Cruse as Frank round out the cast as the men involved with the dysfunctional sisters' lives.

Despite the powerful emotions running amok, this is an incredibly funny play. The strong British vernacular is quite interesting to hear when spoken without the usual accompanying accent. The profanity is often hilarious in its delivery.

Lisa Leighton's costume design is of particular note; each character is as much on display through their attire as they are through the wonderful performances.

Before Brimacombe even spoke at the beginning of the play you could tell exactly what kind of woman she was and when she had lived from her dress, posture, and the soundtrack, provided by Joan Patrick. With Angela Henry's direction, Langham Court Theatre has put together a remarkable show that's not to be missed.