

Flashback To High School With Dog Sees God



The Revelstoke Theatre Company's production of *Dog Sees God: Confessions of a Teenage Blockhead* is certain to reignite many of your long-repressed memories of high school, complete with all the tension, melodrama and, yes, even the tragedy some of us remember. The cast takes a bow at the end of their dress rehearsal on Monday, May 12. From left to right are: Ana Polo, Justin Smith, Hailey Christie-Hoyle, Benjamin Menzies, Jordan Walsh, Danielle Foisy, Chris Fusick and Felicia Van Leur. David F. Rooney photo

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By David F. Rooney

The Revelstoke Theatre Company's production of *Dog Sees God: Confessions of a Teenage Blockhead* is certain to reignite many of your long-repressed memories of high school, complete with all the tension, melodrama and, yes, even the tragedy some of us remember.

Centered around characters based on the gang from Charles Shultz's *Peanuts* comic strip, *Dog Sees God* explores teenage life with remarkable frankness and, ultimately, will send a little shiver up your spine when you recognize, as I did, just how close to home Bert Royal's script comes to real life.



Cb (Jordan Walsh) has lunch with his gang of friends (Hailey Christie-Hoyle, Chris Fusick and Danielle Foisy), all based on characters from Charles Shultz's comic strip, Peanuts. David F. Rooney photo

I need to say a word about the themes and language used on stage. There is a fair amount of coarse language and the subject matter — teen sexuality (especially predatory sexuality), identity, substance abuse, eating disorders, bullying, violence, death and suicide — is *very* mature. **If you want to bring your children to this play you had better be certain your kids are capable of understanding it.**

This roughly 90-minute, two-act play focuses on CB who is bummed out by the death from rabies of his beloved beagle, the institutionalization of his girlfriend and his estrangement from a childhood friend who loved to play Beethoven.

Different vignettes presented throughout the play give it a kind of snapshot quality that the young cast of this production use to good advantage.



Felicia Van Leur acts out her character's angst in one of the little vignette's that pop up in the play. David F. Rooney photo

The cast consists of Benjamin Menzies, Felicia Van Leur, Danielle Foisy, Jordan Walsh, Hailey Christie-Hoyle, Ana Polo, Justin Smith and Chris Fusick. They were extremely well directed by Martin Ralph, Darren McKay and Anna Fin and well supported by the stage crew of Vittoria Van Leur, Rémi Coupier, Izabelle Broere and Imogen Whale.

Jordan Walsh as CB and Benjamin Menzies as Beethoven have roles that demand courage and strength and they managed to deliver. Well done.

Justin Smith is a wonderfully laid back and cool sexual predator, and Hailey and Danielle are marvellously over-the-top teenage drama queens. Felicia Van Leur is engaging as CB's sexually naïve and identity-obsessed sister. One of the most difficult roles is that of Chris Fusick who plays CB's best friend. I can't say anything more than that because it would be a real spoiler.

However, the performance that I thought most captivating was that of Ana Polo, who plays CB's institutionalized girlfriend with a fascination for fire. Again I don't want to play the spoiler but the interlude between her and CB is a show-stealer.

This is an intelligent play for intelligent people and it deserves to do well.

Dog Sees God: Confessions of a Teenage Blockhead is being performed in McGregor's the Powder Springs Inn on May 16 & 17 and on May 20, 21, 22 & 23 at 7:30 pm.



One of the still moments between Ana Polo and John Walsh. If John is CB who do you think Ana is? David F. Rooney photo