

The Last Goddamned Performance Piece

Lonely Egg—Playhouse Studio

You are greeted by these two performers who are stretching, making funny noises, and posing on a lightly lit stage. As the performance ensues, you are introduced to Sky (he) and Rain (she). We are manipulated by silly metaphors, movements, and hilarious dialogue. The whole performance troupe, well, what's left of them, are now breaking up right in front of the audience, while posing behind a performance piece. Are they in love or is it art? This silly, artsy romp was written by the prolific Jayson McDonald.

Better go see this, it may be last time you will be able to!

Kevin Campbell

Oh, That Wily Snake!

Concrete Drops—U of W

As the program describes—one man, one woman, one bed! This insane fantasy of tripping on one's bed can only come from the silly mind of Martin Dockery. The other wonderment of this production was the performers' fantastic chemistry. Vanessa Quesnelle's performance was a playful counterpoint to the cute but mad, ardent pursuit of Dockery's character. This romantic comedy has adventures, innuendo, teasing metaphors, oh, and lotsa lotsa pleading!!!! Go see these two play on stage, you'll laugh your heart out!!

Kevin Campbell

The Corpse Who Wouldn't Shut Up

Magic of One Productions—RRC

One reviewer pointed out that this performance might not be engaging to some and it reminded him of a campfire story where it was okay to be sleepy. That reviewer also gave the play a 3 out of 5 stars. Well, since I was in no way engaged in this particular snooze-fest, I tried to gauge the engagement of the rest of the audience. The engagement level seemed to range from sleeping (and, yes, I saw drool) to polite, albeit wavering, smiles.

This show numbed me from the outset, with an overlong flute/keyboards melody that I kept thinking was ending but, no, there seemed to be just one more verse. Then the stories within the stories began and they were just as meandering and as pointless as the opening music. The protagonist, a corpse-carrying boy whose only real mission was to stay quiet, engendered no sympathy from me and only caused me to say EACH time (to myself, though I wanted to scream it), "THAT was how you were tricked?!!?" How dense are you??" And the finale of the framing tale seemed an afterthought but using the word "thought" implies thinking went into it.

Of course, all this made me think about the lack of dramatic pacing in the story and the stilted, non-dramatic delivery of the performers and the threadbare transitions. It made me think "I wanna get outta here" (as one lucky couple managed to do during another of the four or five interminable flute-keyboard combos). This, of course, is not what one should be thinking when watching a show. One needs to be lost in the stories and totally engaged. Alas, these performers and these stories were not up to the level one would expect from a paid performance.

If you want campfire stories, buy some wood and invite some friends over but don't pay money to see this.

If they gave out negative stars, would they be black holes?

Jay Green

Curriculum Vitae

010011001—Planetarium

Man goes through his work life. Funny. Asides referring to (ir)relevant films included. Well worth seeing—even if you have a job.

E.T. Pritchard

Under the Nose: Memoirs of a Clown

Loonissee—Playhouse Studio

Clowns are never too old!!!

Moving stories from a veteran clown to the fresh bean clown, and a whole lot of laughs.

Mary May

Dying Hard

A Vagrant Theatre—RRC

I was intrigued by the description in the program that led me to this powerful portrayal of this Maritime mining community. The stories are told convincingly by Mikaela Dyke, who plays all six characters: three miners and three of their wives. All of these worn-out yet spirited victims are mesmerizing with true stories compiled from real interviews. The tales are fleshed out brilliantly with simple wardrobe changes, mannerisms, and typical Newfie jargon. Yet the stories told are poignant throughout as we follow their medical odysseys. The compensation they receive (or lack of it) is abhorrent. As an 'ol Fringer, you know when you walk into a juicy one, and this is it.

Kevin Campbell

I loved this show. Some stories just need to be told. And these stories have never been told so well, or by such a lovely performer. The acting in this show rivals anything I have ever seen in more "professional" (read expensive) theatre. I wasn't sure if I wanted to laugh or cry as I was drawn into the lives of the people portrayed. I felt their pain and their strength as Mikaela felt them, seemingly for the first time even though she has obviously

done this show before.

Dying Hard seems like it is not for everyone and I'll admit, if you don't like laughing, if you don't like feeling, if you don't like good acting, if you don't like good stories, and if you've lived in comfort and ease your whole life, this show might not be your cup of tea. But if you've ever needed courage, or wanted a role-model, or suffered through something, then this play will touch your heart, beat it to life, and lift you up.

Eli Grendel

I have to start with the end. When this show ended I felt like I was out of breath. When this show ended I finally leaned back in my chair for only a second before being part of a standing ovation. *Dying Hard* is wonderful. Mikaela plays six characters and each character made me both laugh and tear up.

These are stories that deserve to be heard. Real stories of real people, told by one of their own. The tales of these Newfoundland miners seemed familiar even for a young man from Alberta. *Dying Hard* will reach inside of you and breath new life and appreciation even if you thought you didn't need it.

Make no mistake, the stories are sad and this is a drama; but it is drama done well, something that is so rare it simply doesn't happen, except here. But the theme of the drama, the message behind the stories, is not a message of sadness and fear. It is a message of hope, love, strength, and sheer determination to live, that will leave you feeling like life, no matter how hard, is always worth every moment.

Thanks!

Michael Davidson



The fingers of Colin Godbout star in *The Last Gig of Lenny Breaux*.