

Theatre Orangeville opens 30th season of shows with 'The View from Here'



Written By **Constance Scrafield**

'This is the most intimate and real life play of mine so far,' said the author of the play, 'The View from Here,' Jamie Williams.

He is starring in it with Melanie Janzen, his own wife of twenty-plus years.

The View from Here opens next Thursday, Oct. 12 and runs until Oct. 29.

In brief, the play takes us through a year in the lives of Michael and Mary, who have been married for 32 years. How they view their lives so far is not exactly what they had imagined those decades ago.

'The story begins on New Year's Eve,' Mr. Williams noted. 'and ends on the following New Year's Eve. It's a love letter to those in long term relationships.'

Also, it is a humorous invitation to others in earlier relationships to see how facing the 'storms' can be successfully handled together and with love.

Director of the play, David Nairn, commented, 'It's always an honour to have the playwright in the room when rehearsing and better when they are acting in it too.'

He added, 'Anyone in a long term relationship coming to see this show, will see themselves on the stage. This is funny, touching, from heart to heart.'

The creative (sets, lights, etc.) interest for this production centred specifically on design sequentially through the year, a chance for unique sets and skillful lighting.

'When Beckie [Morris, Theatre Orangeville's production manager and set designer for this show] and I started talking about it,' Mr. Nairn began, 'I said it feels like moving. So, now we physically move.'

This is accomplished by the use of a revolve, usually round. However, Beckie Morris had another idea: a revolve that is square. She saw it as a different shape, but the math and the geometrics to construct it have been interesting.

?Lots of neat theatre tricks,? Mr. Nairn commented with satisfaction. ?This is a first - for the 30th season.?

They are thrilled to have Louise Guinand as lighting designer, one of Canada's most sought-after lighting designers. This production will be Ms. Guinand's 600th professional lighting design.

In ?The View from Here,' Mary is considerably Michael's ?better half.? She is more creative, a producer.

Yet, Mr. Nairn reminded us, ?The words are what matter ? everything else is bells and whistles. And this is a very funny play.?

That the stars portraying a long-time married couple are themselves a married couple means they bring that ?short hand of communication? with them.

Mr. Nairn informed us, ?There is no need for an intimacy coach. There is a tremendous ease between them.?

They are trying to tell stories that matter. The play reaches the whole audience by showing our lives or aspects of our lives on stage.

David Nairn summed up the charm of the play: ?There will be tears of laughter but there could also be tears of connection.?

The View from Here opens Oct. 12 and runs to Oct. 29. For more information, to purchase tickets and subscriptions, go to www.theatreorangeville.ca. You can call the delightful people at the Box Office at 519-942-3423 or visit them at 87 Broadway.

This play is the first show of Theatre Orangeville's 30th Anniversary.