

East Side Player's Rapture thought provoking

MARIA TZAVARAS

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If you've ever experienced a traumatic event, you know that in an instance your life can change forever.

But what some fail to realize is the butterfly effect that your life-altering moment has on others in your life, making it just as life-changing for them.

Rapture, written by Australian playwright Joanna Murray-Smith and East Side Players latest show, portrays that circumstance to a tee as a tragedy leads one couple down a path where no-one else is welcome.

A drama with a thought-provoking story line described as "what happens when cynicism is confronted by faith," this is one of those shows that you have to sit with for a few days to fully absorb and appreciate. Three couples, who have been friends for years, are torn in different directions after one couple, Harry and Henny's (Sean Killackey, Marianne Buslon) house burns down and subsequently, their views of what's important in life changes. The problem is the people they've become doesn't sit well with their friends.

All of this is revealed during a dinner party hosted by Eve and Tom (Alyssa Quart, Chris Coculuzzi) to welcome back Harry and Henny from Europe after the fire, but instead it turns into a heated evening of arguments and truths revealed.

When you add the third couple to the mix, Dan and Jane (Paul Cotton, Stephanie Morson), who bring a unique dynamic to this group, you begin to wonder what these couples had in common in the first place as they all seem so vastly different.

Harry and Henny announce they have given up their high-paying jobs and salaries to live a simple life of spiritualism and giving back. This strikes a chord with everyone, especially Tom, who feels this is a direct attack on those who like a nice home and things that money can buy.

The couple's spiritual enlightenment brings all sorts of things to the surface for each person in the group, and their decision to live a different truth inadvertently causes the others to face some hard truths of their own and admit that they aren't as happy as they pretend to be.

While there are some lighter moments, this story, told in one act that lasts one hour and 40 minutes with no intermission, is also intense and presents the audience with a lot to think about and reflect upon. This means it may not be a story for everyone, but be prepared to contemplate if you do.

Every emotion, of which there are many, and circumstance is impeccably presented by this six-member cast, so realistically that it seems the audience is eavesdropping on a private conversation that could take place in anyone's living rooms.

And each cast member, many of which are new to the East Side Players' stage, did a fantastic job bringing their character to life amongst the heavy discussions, raw emotions and shocking revelations.

The idea that a traumatic event could alter someone's view of what's important in life is not new, but this play will speak to each person differently and perhaps provoke the viewer to be honest about their truth, what it would take to find their happiness and what it is that's holding them back.

Rapture's remaining shows are Feb. 29 and March 1 to 3; 7 to 10 at 8 p.m. Matinee at 2 p.m. on March 4, at The Papermill Theatre, 67 Pottery Rd. Tickets are \$20 or \$15 for students, and can be purchased by calling 416-425-0917 or visiting www.eastsideplayers.ca

