

Theatre Aurora's Lost in Yonkers: A Review



By Scott Johnston

Theatre Aurora wraps up the 2014-15 season with the delightful Neil Simon comedy 'Lost in Yonkers'.

The story takes place in 1942 and centres on young teenage brothers Jay and Arty, who have been left to live with their strong-willed and slightly terrifying grandmother, while their father works out of town for most of the year. During this time, the boys grow as young men with, and sometimes despite, the help of assorted aunts and uncles, each with their own personality quirks and hidden secrets.

This is a well-written play, with lots of amusing observations. Better yet, it is performed by a terrific cast.

As Jay and Arty, Connor Machlachan and Tanner Douglas display great comic timing and presence for such young actors, and manage to get some of the best lines.

John Fetherston as Uncle Louie does a great job of playing a man with dark secrets, who is simultaneously providing a guiding hand for the boys in the absence of their father.

Lori O'Donnell Moritz as strange talking Aunt Gert, and Jeff Naworynski as father Eddie have smaller parts, but perform them well.

Susan Thorburn Lane as the grandmother commands the stage in all of her scenes, easily evoking the unrivalled and inflexible head of the household.

But perhaps the standout performance is Kerrie Lamb as Aunt Bella. It's engrossing to watch her character's transformation from a slightly scattered and timid daughter, to a woman willing to stand up to her domineering mother.

There are a number of nice touches to this show, ranging from well-chosen 1940s music, to amusing off-stage video postcards from Eddie's travels, to the excellent and ever-changing period outfits.

Director Sal Aguila knows how to get the most out of his performers, and keeps the pace moving.

This enjoyable and well-performed play is a great wrap-up to the season.

Evening performances of 'Lost in Yonkers' continue at Theatre Aurora, 150 Henderson Drive, April 23, 24, 25 and 30, and May 1

and 2, with a matinee April 26. Tickets are available through the box office at 905-727-3669.