

Curtain rises on "Songs for a New World"



By Scott Johnston

Theatre Aurora's latest play, "Songs for a New World", is very entertaining, but hard to describe.

It's not actually a play, but a series of songs that don't tell a traditional story, but do share the common theme of characters considering the directions they have in front of them, and where to go next in their lives.

That may sound serious, but the result is a lot of fun, with the four performers each playing a number of roles as diverse as a budding basketball star, to a new mom, to a frustrated husband, to a lonely Mrs. Santa Claus, to everyone in between.

Although each song represents a different story and a new set of characters, the different pieces work well together and flow seamlessly.

While the songs by composer/lyricist Jason Robert Brown are entertaining, they are especially enjoyable as sung by the four performers, who are identified only as Woman 1, Woman 2, Man 1 and Man 2.

Alex Leahy, Mayla Fiona, Murray James-Bosch and Sergio Calderon are all wonderful singers and entertainers, with the women especially putting a great deal of emotion into their solos.

Despite the minimal set, and continually different scenes, the four performers are able to transition from role to role seamlessly to portray the different characters, with only minimal props and costume changes.

An effective part of all of the musical numbers is the choreography, which helps make use of all of the entire stage, and sometimes beyond, and greatly adds to the fun.

Director and choreographer Bob Riddell has done a terrific job bringing out the best in his performers and in pulling together a very entertaining production.

This play is the perfect break for this cold and hectic time of year, and is guaranteed to have you humming at least one of the many catchy songs on your way out.

Evening performances of this limited production of "Songs for a New World" continue at Theatre Aurora, 150 Henderson Drive, December 5, 6, 7, 11, 12, 13 and 14, with a matinee December 8. Tickets are available through the box office at 905-727-3669.