

TA's "Kimberly Akimbo" -- A Review



By Scott Johnston

A person is usually not expected to experience old age and first love at the same time in life, but the title character does just that in Theatre Aurora's production of ?Kimberly Akimbo?.

In an unusual twist, Kimberly has the rare genetic disorder of progeria, which causes symptoms resembling rapid aging, with a result that most victims do not survive past their teens.

Even more unusually, the play, written by Pulitzer prize-winning playwright David Lindsay-Abaire, is a comedy.

The story takes place around the birthday of New Jersey teenager Kimberly. Despite her medical condition, she isn't the only one in her family with personal challenges. This includes her very pregnant and hypochondriac mother, her rarely sober father, and her scam-artist aunt.

Throw in a dark family secret, the challenges of being an old woman at age 16, and that potential first love, and Kimberly has her hands full.

As was overheard in the audience at an early performance, ?the characters in this are great ? they're all different and unique.?

Much of the credit for this goes to the terrific cast.

Joanna Megraw, an actor well beyond her teens, does a great job of portraying Kimberly as the youngest, but most stable-minded member of the family. An intelligent young lady, with all those teenage hopes and dreams, trapped in an aging body.

As swear jar-filling parents Pattie and Buddy, Jamie Defoe and David Mouti have some excellent interactions with both each other and the other characters.

Young friend Jeff, played by Daniel Ciccareli, gradually shows through the play that while not an adult, he is best able to see Kimberly's true self below her aging surface.

Much of the comic relief of the play comes through Aunt Debra, played by Angie Sapalovski. But she also shows some heart amongst all her unusual scams.

The show is directed by Theatre Aurora veteran actor and director Harry Lavigne who knows how to get the best work from his cast. He also makes excellent use of the simple but effective set, which is, appropriately for this play, slightly akimbo.

As one of the characters might say about this production; ?neat party line sign? (an interesting play).

Evening performances of ?Kimberly Akimbo? continue at Theatre Aurora, 150 Henderson Drive, February 12, 13 & 14. Tickets are available through the box office at 905-727-3669.