

Theatre Aurora wraps 2023-24 season with ?On Golden Pond?



A Review by Scott Johnston

Theatre Aurora wraps up its 2023-24 season with Ernest Thompson's classic ?On Golden Pond?.

Set at a lakeside summer house in Maine, the play explores the past and current relationships between aging couple Norman and Ethel, and their daughter, Chelsea, who arrives to visit along with her new fiancé Bill and his son.

There are a number of factors at play here including Norman's stubbornness and increasing memory loss, the contrast in the couple's personalities and outlooks on life, a past estrangement between father and daughter, and how a young teenager's presence may impact the crusty Norman (and vice versa).

All are explored with sensitivity and wit, and will keep you engrossed until the end.

Although a well-written play, this production really shines courtesy of its remarkable cast under the leadership of director Barb Jones.

Tom Quinn and Jennifer Senior as Norman and Ethel are outstanding, bringing real personality to their characters. Through all of their many interactions, you truly get the impression that these two have been together and loved each other all of their long lives.

Joe Nessuna is great fun as Charlie the mailman, an endlessly cheerful local who never resists an invitation in for a coffee, biscuit(s) and chat.

As daughter Chelsea, Karen Fogleman nicely demonstrates the growth and evolution of her character through her life, as seen in her relationships with Charlie and her father.

Steve Hopkinson as fiancé Bill provides humour through his portrayal of a man in an unfamiliar rural setting dealing with an unexpected introduction to his potential in-laws.

It's fun watching Jacob Fogleman-Cluff's character Billy growing from indifferent urban teen to being one of the family, as he thrives in the countryside, mentored by his new grandfather figure.

The set is terrific, and wonderfully evokes a seasonal cottage on a lake, as do other touches such as loon calls, and lighting that

emulates different times of the day.

This is a very heart-warming and enjoyable play that will likely remind viewers of familiar situations or figures from their own lives. It's a solid and touching conclusion to Theatre Aurora's 2023-24 season.

Evening performances of "On Golden Pond" continue at Theatre Aurora, 150 Henderson Drive, April 18, 19, 20, 25, 26 and 27, with matinees April 20, 21 and 27. Tickets are available through the box office at 905-727-3669.