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Inland Stage Presents 'Baby with the Bathwater'

The Inland Stage Company features Christopher Durang's complex comedy "Baby with the Bathwater," directed by Kristopher Ourth, at the Diamond Valley Arts Council's Esplanade Art Center.

"If there ever was a play about 'bad parenting,' this would be it," Ourth said. "Sometimes it is so difficult being a parent, but even more terrifying being a child. We don't necessarily hate new parents Helen and John, because as much as they want to do everything right, they end up doing everything wrong, yet we still may see a little bit of ourselves in both of them. But overall, I think Durang is targeting parenthood, and he does it in such a way that skewers Mom and Dad with a savagely gleeful wit and wacky black humor."

Ourth couldn't have asked for a more perfect and brilliant cast.

"Each and every one of my actors are surpassing my expectations in each of their roles," he said. "I find it funny that it may take a special kind of actor, or a person for that matter, to understand Durang's twisted wit, and I am glad that I may have found just the right 'twisted' actors to fit the bill."

Josh Somers plays the role of Daisy.

"There are some people that grow up being misled about things in life. From the trivial Easter bunny to, in my character's case, gender," Somers said. "This is an absurdist piece that pushes the flux of life to the realm of extreme. Once born my parents raise me as a girl instead of a boy. Something not often done by parents but there are many choices made by parents that affect their child's life."

Much of the show is beyond reality.

"Often times reading and viewing this play I feel as though it is a dream or memory of my character; there are things that seem beyond reality," Somers said. "Yet, like in all dreams, hidden truths and recognizable qualities of human condition stand out. In the end the show says to me, everyone is a little crazy, everyone has issues, we are all one in this world and trying to push through what we get stuck with for something better."

Venissa Timbreza plays three characters in the show.

"Nanny is Mary Poppins with a twisted reality. She hears no evil. There are moments in the first act that she is insulted and she simply doesn't translate it. She has good parenting advice but rarely follows it herself. She is so funny because there is a reality to her insanity," Timbreza said.

Kate is a woman in the park, overlooking her child play.

"She is the original soccer mom who may be a little jaded," Timbreza said. "I also play the principle. She reflects Nanny's style. She hears only portions of the conversation and goes onto completely different subjects. She also happens to be a bit misandristic, being a bit verbally abusive to her male secretary."

Vanessa Downs plays Helen, Daisy's mother.

“Helen is sort of an enigma. On the outside, she appears to be the quintessential mother, but almost immediately you start to see that she has a few screws loose,” Downs said. “Helen vacillates wildly from one emotional extreme to another as she tries her best to raise her child. Helen's parenting techniques are definitely nontraditional.”

Downs believes the audience will first and foremost love the humor of the show.

“The writing is brilliant, and Kristopher is a wonderful director. He really helps to bring the show alive and find those extra bits of humor as well as depth. I also think the audience will really appreciate the bad parenting on display. Our own mistakes don't seem so bad in the face of such odd characters like John and Helen,” Downs said.

“The audience will definitely have a great time with the wacky humor, yet will hopefully still leave thinking about how crazy parenthood really is,” Ourth said.

“Baby with the Bathwater” plays at 8 p.m. Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, and 2 p.m. Sunday, May 9 through 19. General Admission tickets are \$12, Senior tickets are \$10, Student tickets are \$7, and can be purchased on the website at www.inlandstage.org. Thursdays are ‘Pay What You Can Night,’ with a suggested \$5 donation. ISC also offers group rates and season tickets.

“Baby with the Bathwater” is the second to last show of the ISC season. The next show is the amazing comedy/mystery “Communicating Doors” by Alan Ayckbourn, which plays June 20 through 30.

The Diamond Valley Arts Council’s Esplanade Art Center is located at 2181 W. Esplanade Ave., San Jacinto, CA. For more information or reservations, please call the box office at (951) 600-7273 x100.

Photo Caption: (from left to right) Venissa Timbreza, Vanessa Downs and Adam Fagaly.

