



REVIEW: The Drawer Boy

By ASHLEY GOODFELLOW

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Sitting in the audience of *The Drawer Boy* is like being let in on an incredible secret— it's so special that you want to keep it to yourself, but you can't stop yourself from talking about it. The play, written by Michael Healey, is a riveting piece of Canadian theatre that should not be overlooked. It guides the audience through a beautiful and simple story that underlines themes of loyalty and personal boundaries— and it does so in a graceful manner.

Miles Potter is a young, eager actor from Toronto who knocks on the farmhouse door of life-long friends Morgan and Angus. Miles is researching farm life for a collective theatre project and asks to stay with the farmers to observe and lend a hand. As he spends time with the two, he begins to tug at the loose threads that have woven the two friends so closely together, not realizing the impact his naive curiosity will have. Morgan and Angus are veterans of war who have found a delicate balance in their companionship— and Morgan will go to great lengths to protect their simple life and his simple friend Angus, who was injured during the war resulting in memory loss and emotional outbursts.

All the elements are already in place to set *The Drawer Boy* up for success: it is a multiple award-winner with a fantastic script. Without a stage, set or actors, the story on its own is a triumph— which means that to present the play effectively, one must find exactly the right talent to do so. And, therein lies the challenge with staging a classic.

The Rose Theatre's Summer Theatre Series presents *The Drawer Boy* as its third installment in the series, and it does not disappoint.

This production gives us a winning cast— Rod Ceballos as Angus, Andy Ingram as Miles and Dan Karpenchuck as Morgan— and with that, the play shines.

Angus is the drawer boy, a title given to him for his love of drawing before the war. Ceballos' portrayal of the memory-impaired war veteran is heartfelt and poetic. He captures the simple yet complex personality that lives within Angus with ease, and wastes no time connecting with the audience. From the slight shuffle in his gait to his saluting "ok", Ceballos stays on course with Angus and gives a stellar performance. His depiction of Angus is played nicely against Karpenchuck's Morgan, and the two strike a symmetry that is familiar to real life. Karpenchuck takes on Morgan with gusto; his performance is stocked with passion and sincerity and clever bits of comedy— especially his interactions with Miles.

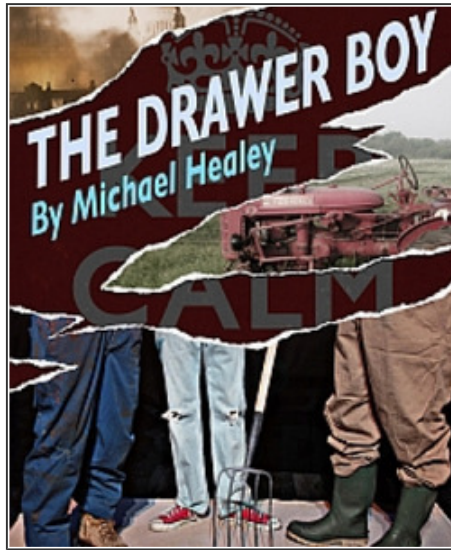
Ingram gives a solid performance as the gullible young actor Miles, who is genuine in his quest to gather information on all-things-farming but not so skilled on the farm. Ingram props the audience up nicely for the comedy in the story, and gives the play its spark.

Scott Lale, director of *The Drawer Boy*, should be applauded for assembling a production that is both honest and compelling.

The play takes place on a small farm in Clinton, Ontario in 1972, and is an important piece of Canadian theatre— it not only tells a story we can all empathize with, it presents our unique history, culture and struggles.

It's a thoughtful drama that is delicate and powerful— one that draws out the raw essence of human nature and relationship.

The Drawer Boy runs at the Rose Theatre in the Studio until Aug. 27. For tickets and information call 905-874-



The Drawer Boy. The Drawer Boy runs at the Rose Theatre Aug. 5 to 27.

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