

“Waxing West” adds Immigrant Belief in America to the Women's Voices Theatre Festival

Entertainment 2018-01-23 09:28:49

Washington, DC - 4615 Theatre Company has contributed to the Women's Voices Theatre Festival with a timely and thoughtful production of “Waxing West” by Saviana Stanesco. Herself an immigrant, she arrived to the gleaming promise that America has held for generations of those seeking to better their lives, and ours, in this great country. She made New York City her home for a few short weeks before disaster struck.

Stanesco has crafted a play that mixes the strong roots of one's first culture with the broadly American one. She plays on the popular images many Americans hold of Romania as a place of vampires, inscrutable attitudes and aberrant political leadership, and hammers this together in fits and starts. Popular American melodies like John Denver's ‘Country Roads’ are mashed up with tunes like ‘Bye Bye Die Die’ and ‘I Want to be Your Cook,’ but the sound system during our performance did not do justice to the performers and undermined the playwright's interestingly crafted musical interludes.

Alexandra Nicopoulos, as Daniela, handles the abrupt and jarring script changes well and conveys insight as an immigrant sorting through the values that torment her from her mother country and those she contends with life in America. Our Thanksgiving turkey is skewered with Charlie Cook as an unsettling Charlie, the husband to be for Daniela. Nahm Darr and Alani Kravitz, as the husband and wife dictatorial duo of the Ceausescu's, haunt Daniela with all the grandiose absurdities they visited on the Romanian people. Jack Russ is a mischievous delight throughout as Daniela's cheeky, cynical brother, Elvis. From the opening scene; to the Michael Jackson moon walk moves in the party scene; to the macabre, creepy expressions in the final horrific haunting; this is focused, young talent adding glimmer.

“Waxing West” is timely in its examination of common humanity and understanding that grows between immigrants and good Americans and stands in contrast to the ugly, racism animating our very, very White House today. The playwright, Saviana Starnescu, has given us a piece that explores traditional patriarchal society that must not be questioned, much like the misinformed assertions of Donald Trump, and contrasts that with the will of women of determination and perseverance to make their way in our America, while staying true to themselves and their dignity. Jordan Friend directs. This play and its cast are a worthy inclusion in the Women's Voices Theatre Festival.

Performances are taking place now thru February 10th at the Highwood Theatre, 914 Silver Spring Avenue in Silver Spring. Tickets are available at www.4615theatre.com.

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