

ENTERTAINMENT

Review: ‘Grace & Glorie’ superb



Erin Ormond and Valerie Pearson are Grace and Glorie in the Chemainus Theatre Festivals excellent new drama, onstage only until Nov. 7.

— Image Credit: Photo Courtesy Of The Chemainus Theatre Festival

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With the new production Grace and Glorie, Chemainus Theatre reminds us just how powerful — and enjoyable — a simple drama can be.

Chemainus Theatre has become known for its superb musical productions and often its offerings depend on great melodies, straight-up humour or suspense.

But with their newest production, which opened last week for a very short run that only goes until Nov. 7, they remind audiences that two good actors playing out a situation that, on the surface, could have come from the lives of thousands of ordinary people, can have just as big an impact on the audience as a large-scale production number.

Grace and Glorie is an intimate story that rests on the oddball pairing of an illiterate small-town farm wife who is 90 years old and dying and the Harvard-educated, MBA-wielding former New Yorker who signs on to be the dying woman’s hospice volunteer so she’ll have something to do with her days after leaving her high-flying, lucrative career.

Erin Ormond plays Gloria, the hospice volunteer, while Valerie Pearson plays the dying and ornery Grace. Both actors embody their characters to perfection as the bond between them grows. It's a testament to them both that the audience feels as if we know these women by the time the lights go down — they feel like real people we could call friends.

The characters are specific women in a specific situation in place and time, but as a whole the play is more than that.

Here is a story about the meaning of life, what it means to be a woman, what it is to die, what's really important and the joys and sorrows that make up every day. But this isn't some tedious lecture on the nature of the human condition from playwright Tom Zeigler.

While you might reach for a tissue a few times during the show, you'll also laugh out loud, particularly at the antics that ensue from Gloria being such a fish out of water in the less-than-modern cottage that Grace has chosen to die in.

Whether the ladies are debating using an heirloom soup tureen as a bedpan or talking about what it's like to endure the death of a child you'll be riveted to the stage by Ormond and Pearson.

This play finds the heart in all of us and reaches out to gently touch. The ending is pitch perfect and will leave a tear in your eye and a smile on your face at the same time.

Grace and Glorie touches the heart and stays in your thoughts long after you have left the theatre.

You really won't want to miss this superb piece of theatre, so get your tickets fast.