

Time has come today

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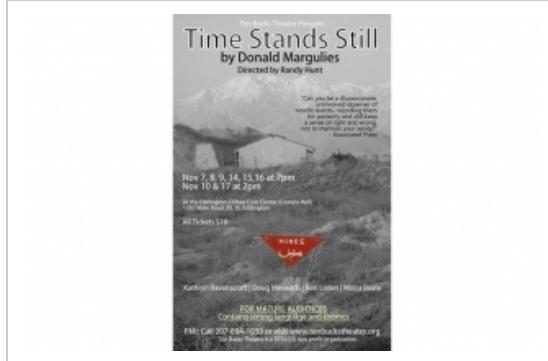
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Time Stands Still

Ten Bucks Theatre presents 'Time Stands Still'

EDDINGTON – What if the person that you loved was consumed with a need that you could no longer understand? What if that person had no choice but to place him- or herself in harm's way in order to fulfill that need? And despite your best efforts to share in that need, you simply couldn't be there the way he or she was? Could your relationship survive? Would you want it to?

Those are the sorts of questions that are raised in Donald Margulies's play "Time Stands Still." Ten Bucks Theatre's production of the show is running through Nov. 17 at the Eddington/Clifton Civic Center. Tickets are, as you might have guessed, \$10.

Sarah (Kathryn Ravenscraft) is a photojournalist – one of the best – who has just returned home after a near-death accident in a Middle Eastern war zone. Her longtime romantic partner Jamie (Doug Meswarb) – a freelance journalist in his own right – has brought her back to their Brooklyn loft in order to begin the process of putting their lives back together.

But Sarah isn't content to be treated like an invalid; she feels caged and condescended to and soon finds herself lashing out. Meanwhile, for what seems like the first time, Jamie is struggling to put words on paper. The two of them have a multitude of unresolved issues; the ghosts of what happened in the desert are still floating through their everyday lives.

Their longtime friend Richard (Ron Lisnet) – a prominent photo editor – tries to get both Sarah and Jamie back on their respective horses, though they each have very different reactions to the idea. By Richard's side is Mandy (Moira Beale), who is Richard's sweet, naïve and *much* younger new girlfriend and carries a far more optimistic outlook on life and the world at large than the primarily cynical Sarah and Jamie.

As time passes and Sarah's accident gradually fades into the past, these four friends find their lives shifting and changing – sometimes for the better, other times for the worse. And each of them is forced to confront the truth about what it is that they truly want ... a truth that may prove more painful than any of them could have anticipated.

One of the biggest surprises with "Time Stands Still" is how funny it is. Make no mistake; the play carries serious themes on scales both grand and small. And those moments are beautifully rendered. But it's the humor that finds its way into the spaces between that fully humanize the characters, making the poignancy that much more impactful.

The cast is a uniform delight. The dynamic between Ravenscraft and Meswarb carries a blunt delicacy – they bounce from caring to caustic and back again effortlessly. The love between Sarah and Jamie is a complicated one; the two actors do fine work in capturing that complexity. Meswarb wears his inner conflict well, allowing cracks in the veneer just wide enough for us to see through. And while Ravenscraft bears scar on her face throughout, it's the well-played scarring of her emotional wounds that makes her fascinating to watch.

Lisnet strikes just the right balance of sincerity and snark in his portrayal of Richard. His ultimate refusal to pity his friends might be the strongest choice made by anyone in the entire piece and Lisnet finds the perfect tone. Beale's Mandy is surprisingly strong; it's the sort of character that could have come off as one-dimensional. Instead,

Beale imbues her with an inner strength of character that is quite compelling.

The show stands strong on its technical merits as well. Lights (by Sue Shane), set and makeup (by Elaine Bard) and costumes (supervised by Katie Toole) – all the elements come together to create a living, breathing home for these characters.

Director Randy Hunt has given himself a challenge with this show. A play like "Time Stands Still" is incredibly demanding of everyone involved. Questions both profound and personal are raised by a piece such as this one. As such, Hunt has acquitted himself admirably, fostering a strong ensemble cast and painting a vivid picture on the stage.

"Time Stands Still" is indicative of the high quality of local community-driven theater our area is currently experiencing. Ten Bucks is offering audiences a compelling, engaging story; you'd be well-served to take the time to watch it be told.

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