

BANGOR DAILY NEWS

Ten Bucks Theatre to perform 'Virginia Woolf'

By Emily Burnham, BDN Staff

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In 1962, the year it premiered on Broadway, Edward Albee's "Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?" was a groundbreaking foray into the ugly side of domestic life and a fascinating character study of four very different people.

Though social mores have changed radically in the ensuing decades, the verbal pyrotechnics and dramatic power of "Virginia Woolf" haven't decreased a bit. That's why Ben Laymen chose to direct the play for Ten Bucks Theatre company. It will run for four performances this weekend; 7 p.m. Oct. 14-16 and 2 p.m. Oct. 17 at the Eddington-Clifton Civic Center on Route 9 in Eddington.

"It's always been a play I've wanted to tackle. It's a story I love," said Laymen, who last directed "Much Ado About Nothing" over the summer on the Ellsworth riverfront. "I wanted to challenge myself as a director, and this is a very intimate drama, so this is what I wanted to do."

The story, in a nutshell, involves middle-aged married couple George and Martha, who invite the young, naive couple Nick and Honey over for cocktails — but end up involving them in their own sparring match of insults and abuse. The cruelty of the back-and-forth increases as the play moves along, with Nick and Honey eventually being brought into the abuse, and a gripping ending that still manages to shock audiences after all these years.

George and Martha are played by longtime Ten Bucks actors Ron and Julie Lisnet, who appear as Basil and Sybil Fawly in the company's yearly "Fawly Towers" productions. Nick and Honey are portrayed by Greg Mihalik and Jasmine Ireland.

"We have lucked out in that we've come up with some really stellar performances," said Laymen. "I can't say enough about what they are doing. They're four really great actors, and they've really dived into their parts."

Ten Bucks has traditionally tackled a more difficult play in the fall, as with last year's production of two Harold Pinter plays. The spring is reserved for lighter comedy, usually the "Fawly Towers" and "Monty Python" shows held in April. In the summer, a Shakespeare play is performed outdoors in Brewer and Bucksport.

Laymen is equally comfortable directing an intense drama like "Virginia Woolf" as he is comedy

and horror. By this time next year, Laymen hopes to complete a stage adaptation of the classic horror film "Night of the Living Dead."

"I've got lots of things on my wish list," he said.

Tickets for "Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?" are \$10; \$5 for students. It is recommended only for mature audiences. For information, visit www.tenbuckstheatre.org.

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