



Adelaide Theatre Guide

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MOON OVER BUFFALO

Tea Tree Players

Tea Tree Players Theatre
Until 1 June 2019

Review by Brian Godfrey

Whilst American playwrights don't tend to handle farcical comedies well, Ken Ludwig is one very notable and successful exception to the rule. His 'theatrical' farces are fast, funny and fabulously fantastic.

"Moon Over Buffalo" is set in 1953 and takes place in a far from ordinary (or one would certainly hope so) day in the lives of a touring Repertory Theatre company led by a prominent 'has-been', George Hay. Mayhem and mirth follow as Hay tries to cope with his 'leading lady' wife, his latest actress dalliance, his mother-in-law, a lawyer, a stage manager, his daughter and her new weather man boyfriend – even Hollywood super director, Frank Capra (this was before Spielberg).

Having directed this play before, Jo Allenby knows what she is doing and does it well. The pace is just right – not too fast that we don't know what is going on, but not too slow so that we don't care what is going on. All the action is handled deftly by her and the cast with the comedy flowing like the Torrens after a mighty downpour.

As the philandering, alcoholic, 'never really was' actor and leader of the troupe, George Hay, Andrew Crayford shows why he is much sought after on the Adelaide theatrical scene. His comic timing, both verbally and especially physically, are spot on. Audiences' bladders should be emptied during the interval, otherwise they will wet themselves with his hilarious 'drunk' portrayal in Act Two.

Reprising her role as Charlotte Hay from the Players' first production of "Moon Over Buffalo" is the always captivating Chris Galipo. This wonderful actor always manages to display class in whatever she tackles, and her sense of comedy is impeccable.

Cathie Oldfield returns to the stage after a sizable absence from acting and is delightful as George's mother-in-law cum costume mistress: she expresses 'being put upon hautiness' so well. David Kinna and Stephen Prior carry off their slightly under written roles with aplomb, proving that old theatrical adage that there are no small parts. Kahlia Feuerreiter is very believable as George's latest dalliance.

Having impressed this reviewer with her performance in Tea Tree Players' "Out Of Sight, Out Of Murder", Stacey Murray impresses once more as the daughter, Rosalind Hay. Her accent, manner and acting style are spot-on for the period. And speaking of impressive performances, young Kieran Drost is superb as timid weather man/boyfriend/big fan Howard. He has the twerpy, innocent, honest 1950s style down to a tee; we know what he is going to be as soon as we see him, without him even opening his mouth - Hiram Fly in human form! Watch out for this young man!

Never mind Buffalo, this moon shines luminously over the north/eastern Adelaide area.