



Adelaide Theatre Guide

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THE SECRETS OF UNSETTLING MANOR

Wined Up Theatre

Seaford Community Centre

Until 29 May

Review by Janice Bailey

If laughter is the best medicine, I believe last night's audience at "The Secrets of Unsettling Manor" at Seaford Community Centre will be well and truly surrounded in a pleasant glow for several days. I have been having flashbacks all day. Clint Mullins – writer/director and Inspector Sweetie in the play – has created a winner with this show.

The premise centres around the cast of Little Woppingville Theatre Company participating in the final dress rehearsal of "The Secrets of Unsettling Manor". The cast change characters throughout the play – it is done so well that it is not confusing to the audience – most of the characters are so 'over the top' yet remain believable. Anyone who has ever been involved in a community theatre play will relate to the characters and their egos with delight.

General Lee Unsettling has 'shuffled off (t)'his mortal coil' and the family have gathered for the reading of the will with anticipation. Although the fourth wall is broken continually this is not disconcerting at all, as what usually happens during this time is hilarious. Julie Oldknow as the maid endeavours to keep 'the goings on' in some semblance of order – but in vain.

Sue Oldknow as Scarlet Blade literally 'swans' around the set constantly breaking into song – although her excellent vocal ability cannot be denied – her fellow actors are not impressed. The audience, however, are appreciative. Mark Hallam in an acting role is imposing as Dennis Deer, the husband of Rachel Blundey's Dr Deer, not of the medical kind but the scientific. Rachel's portrayal of Dr Deer is suitably 'knowing' and supercilious. Clint Mullins plays Inspector Sweetie, who has the dubious job of trying to determine how General Lee Unsettling expired. He does this with a commanding presence. General Lee Unsettling is played by Robyn Trebilcock who doesn't have to bring this character 'to life'!

Suzie Cherry's portrayal of Mrs Faye Canoes is quite brilliant – her makeup and demeanour create a character that is hilarious and she doesn't miss an opportunity to demonstrate her skill. Jenn Barrett arrives at the Manor as the General's grand-daughter and is annoyingly excitable and youthful, with the undeniable expectation that she will be the heir to the General's fortune. Finally, Kirsty Battersby as the Props Gal is endearingly lovable and funny in her endeavours to please – her performance is metred and controlled and quite superb in its understatement – a delightful characterisation.

Every person involved in this production should be proud of their efforts. Well done to all. Bravo!