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It's funny but now that the days are shorter, and darkness comes sooner ...

By Pat Taylor on November 14th, 2013 Printer-Friendly Like 4 Tweet 0 +1 0 Share

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- Kyle Moore
- Lloyd E. Flyer
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- Patte Barham
- Rick Assad
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- Samm Brown III
- Samuel Sperling
- Sandy Smith

I find it hard to accomplish as much. It's a big adjustment for me every year. I wonder if everyone feels that way....

Barrymore

I caught a mind-bendingly powerful one man production on the weekend. Solo plays are generally not my favorite format, as I love the interaction of a full cast. This one however is a captivating must see for all theater lovers! (Also an invaluable "study" for other stage actors.) Set in 1942 and written cleverly by William Luce with an in depth look at the declining years of John Barrymore's career, we are privy to his witty and bawdy nature and bittersweet memories. From his dysfunctional marriages to his infamous theatrical family, to his burning desire to rise again in the hearts of his fans, his emotions are reeling. Now aging, and "boozing" to face his decline ... his caustic charm, dapper looks, and undeniable wit remain ... but his memory, notoriety, and power are on the decline. This role won Christopher Plummer the Tony Award in 1997. Directed with heartfelt passion by Janet Miller, we are privy to Barrymore's attempt to rise up again in popularity and fame. Taking place in an empty theatre, he and his loyal offstage "line prompter" Frank, rehearse a reprise of Barrymore's Richard III, which gained him fame and notoriety in 1920. An unseen voice from the wings ...



Gordon Goodman as "Barrymore."



Matt Franta is Frank in "Barrymore."

Matt Franta gives a pivotal, funny, and remarkable performance, as Barrymore's devoted though frustrated line assistant. Now, let's talk about the brilliance of Gordon Goodman's multi-faceted performance! In turns, he is charming, elegant, bawdy, animated, self-deprecating, hilarious, bitter, "off color" ... and captivating throughout. He shares Barrymore's memories and deepest feelings, with flawless timing and infectious charm. A fabulous and many faceted depiction! The audience was spellbound! A strong contender I feel, for solo performance accolades ... come theatre award season. Setting the mood perfectly ... kudos to Scott Walewski for his rustic and woodsy backstage set, Kathy Gillespie and Barbara Weisel for costume design, and Katherine Barrett for lighting design. This is an unforgettable evening of theater ... which the opening night audience rewarded with a rousing standing ovation! Do try to catch this one, but be aware ... it only runs on weekends

through Dec. 1. For tickets call (323) 655-7679 ext. 100 or go to GoodPeopleTheatreCo.org. The Greenway Court Theatre is located at 544 N. Fairfax in Hollywood. Free parking in the lot just north of the theatre, on Fairfax.

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I only caught one production for "review" on the weekend ...

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Comfy in my P.J.'s, I was intensely wrapped up in all the TV season's "opening episodes" ...

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