

THEATER & DANCE

Review

"Waiting for Godot"

By: Samuel Beckett

Produced by: Stinky Boots Productions and [Dragon Productions Theatre Company](#)

Directed by: Jeanie Smith

Featuring: Robert Sean Campbell, Jack Champlin, Michael Champlin, Ronal Feichtmeir, Jim Johnson

Running time: 120 minutes, one intermission

When: September 16 through October 2, 2016

Where: Dragon Theatre, 2120 Broadway Street, Downtown Redwood City

Tickets: \$25-\$30; \$175 for VIP box (seats four, includes champagne and chocolates). Visit

<http://www.dragonproductions.net/box-office/vbo-test.html> or call 650-493-2006.



Kimberlee Wittlieb / Dragon Theatre

Ronald Feichtmeir as Estragon, left, and Jim Johnson as Vladimir are brilliant in delivering Samuel Beckett's astounding dialogue in "Waiting for Godot" at Dragon Theatre in Downtown Redwood City, September 16 through October 2, 2016.

Time well spent, 'Waiting for Godot'

Director Jeanie Smith's excellent cast delivers Samuel Beckett masterpiece at the Dragon

By John Orr

September 17, 2016

But what does it all mean?

Samuel Beckett's confounding "Waiting for Godot" has been explained in limitless numbers of ways.

I will add my own questionable thoughts as this piece wears on.

But first, let me start by loudly applauding the production at Dragon Productions Theatre Company in Redwood City.

Director Jeanie Smith put together an excellent cast that is a joy to watch.

Beckett's language is amazing, wandering from standard if weird modern phrasing to constructions much like some of Shakespeare's later plays.

Ronald Feichtmeir as Estragon and Jim Johnson as Vladimir are brilliant as they bat the words back and forth, in speeches that begin in the middle and go nowhere, and dialog that begins in one place, wanders away, then maybe returns much later.

It is hilarious. The words are funny. The physical gags are funny.

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Estragon's and Vladimir's ongoing confusion about where they are and what they are doing is funny.

And, it is deeply tragic.

The two hapless vagbonds who are waiting for the mysterious Godot are interrupted by the entrance of Robert Sean Campbell as the deeply tortured Lucky, and Michael Champlin as the more or less friendly but arrogant Pozzo, who keeps Lucky on a leash, lords it over everyone, but can't even sit down without the help of other people.

Campbell is an excellent actor who piles on the pathos as the exhausted Lucky, who carries Pozzo's bags and stool and has wounds on his neck from the rope that is tied there. As the play proceeds around him, we watch him collapse into himself from exhaustion, only to be threatened into movement once again by Pozzo.

His one bit of speech — when he is demonstrating his "thinking" to amuse Estragon and Vladimir at Pozzo's behest — starts out pedantic and erodes into nonsense.

— Advertising —



He is a deeply tragic character, well played by Campbell.

Champlin, who is always fun to watch, brings both Pozzo's arrogance and confusion to the stage.

Feichtmeir and Johnson are awesome. They have fascinating dialogue to deliver, in complicated, intertwining expositions that must be delivered like music to make any sense at all, and these guys make that happen.

Their dialog sometimes seems like nonsense, but really, it represents what we

all do in trying to figure our lives. What we are, where we are, where we are doing. The ongoing mystery of life.

Pozzo represents the bosses, the masters, the lords of the manor who think they are beneficent even as they are blind to the suffering of those around them, and cruel to those who devotedly work for them. Lucky is the deluded worker who can't see a better way to be.

The entire play is poetry, and delights with humor even as it spurs thought.

Campbell is scenic designer for this show, and his simple wall hangings and beam as a tree work very nicely. Lighting Designer Dan Garrett worked magic in the generally dark Dragon space.

Jeanie Smith is one of the Bay Area's busiest directors, for good reason. This show hums along like a well-tuned race car.

Email John Orr at johnorr@regardingarts.com



Kimberlee Wittlieb / Dragon Theatre

Robert Sean Campbell as Lucky, Jim Johnson as Vladmir, Ronald Feichtmeir as Estragon, and Michael Champlin as Pozzo, from left, in "Waiting for Godot" at Dragon Theatre in Downtown Redwood City, September 16 through October 2, 2016.



Kimberlee Wittlieb / Dragon Theatre

Ronald Feichtmeir as Estragon, Jim Johnson as Vladmir, and Jack Champlin as Boy, from left, in "Waiting for Godot" at Dragon Theatre in Downtown Redwood City, September 16 through October 2, 2016.

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