

## Blackhorse Village Players ? The Accidental Hit Man Blues is a sure-fire hit

Despite the title, it's no accident Blackhorse Village Players score a resounding success with *The Accidental Hit Man Blues*. In a show not to be missed, detectives Mully and Sculder (yes, that's the way they say it) search out the whys and wherefores of a series of murders carried out by an alleged hit man. Among the persons of interest, they are quick to interview Ron and Laura, a sweetly starry-eyed couple, allegedly innocent bystanders to the presumed killings. All is not as it seems, and it promises to be a highly entertaining evening before a most surprising solution.

As Laura, Chrystal Howard smoothly plays a role that calls for wide eyed innocence and artful trickery, a slippery slope to climb, particularly when love, murder and potatoes are at the peak. Howard is entirely convincing in a first appearance at Blackhorse, and inspires confidence, a difficult task to master when you are a down-and-out-of-work wife in ?the only twenty dollar a night hotel room in the world.?

She is aided and abetted by Ron, an equally financially bedraggled spouse (Aaron Verwey). Somehow, the acting duo have a chemistry that triggers success. Being enormously likable, they have the audience wondering how they will manage; but manage they do, leaving a trail of alleged victims in their wake as well as a most appreciative audience.

You will meet the long-suffering Mrs. Frobisher (Rosaleen Egan), set upon by a philandering husband, and her fate is delightful. In a sensitive performance, Egan inspires sympathy not only from Ron and Laura, but from the audience who silently cheer her on. As a writer turned actor, Egan knows how to use words well.

Then there's Sammy/Hit Man (Kevin DeLand), priceless in a dual role that brings out the best of gawky youth and shady villain. In a Blackhorse debut, DeLand holds attention easily, be it flopping in the face of Laura's iron fist or counting his ?secs? to a hilarious outcome.

Not all victims are alleged; some, the likes of Johnny (Morris Durante), merit their fate. Despite playing a villain, Durante manages to be the most endearing performer in the show. His brawny blow hard demeanor has the audience in stitches. As Johnny hops desperately across the stage, hoping to forestall his demise, there's as much talent in the action as the dialogue, and with each leap, the laughter mounts.

The tension mounts too, with each appearance of the dynamic crime duo, Mully (Vince Ursini) and Sculder (Dominique Ursini). Ursini offers a commanding performance, saluted reluctantly by Laura and Ron. He easily manipulates a scene to his advantage, and the ending is totally surprising given such a talent to pull it off. The prim and proper Sculder takes a professional turn and emerges at the top, thanks not only to a twist in the plot but a versatile talent that takes her from backstage management to the spotlight of success. Well done, detectives!

*The Accidental Hit Man Blues*, as directed by Kim Perry Blacklock, with co-producers Cheryl Phillips and Ginny Cathcart, and stage manager Jim Gillies, offers hilarity, fun, and a fresh outlook on the work of a hitman. On stage Jan. 24, 25, 26, 30 and Feb. 1, it's not to be missed.

Call for ticket information at 905-880-5002.