

Caledon Town Hall Players present Kiss the Moon, Kiss the Sun

By Constance Scrafield

Caledon Town Hall Players (CTHP) opens this weekend with Norm Foster's play 'Kiss the Moon, Kiss the Sun,' a story about an unusual friendship that begins in a moment of crisis.

Holly and Robert meet on a bus. Robert is a 35-year-old man with the mental capacity of an eight-year-old, which does not mean he has no wisdom. Holly is a young woman unexpectedly pregnant and on her own. When Robert invites Holly home for dinner, she meets his mother Claire, who has worries and fears of her own.

The Script Reading committee of CHTP chose this play for the community theatre's 2022 season.

'We're pleased to take this on,' said director Amanda Dempsey-Laughlin. 'It's touching and beautiful - bring your Kleenex. When I read it, I immediately fell in love with the characters.'

Puneet Bajwa as Holly brings humour and emotion to every scene, Ms. Laughlin assured the Citizen. She added that the relationship between Holly and Robert, played by Ceirin Mettler, is very well-developed, believable and endearing.

'We had started our rehearsals in person until the January lockdown, then Zoom just to keep everyone connected. It has worked out well,' said Ms. Laughlin. 'How Holly cares for Robert is evident. Their friendship is very visible; people will [appreciate] their chemistry.'

She went on to explain that Claire's chief concern is for her son's safety. A doctor has told her she has something wrong which can be controlled by medications. Her thoughts turn to her son, Robert: What if he is left alone? Obviously, she is protective of him after Robert's accident left him with the thinking level of an 'eight year child.

'But he is also quite perceptive,' commented Ms. Laughlin.

Kiss the Moon, Kiss the Sun has been a favourite with community and professional theatres alike, all across Canada and the U.S.A. Little wonder for the play brings issues to light that are frequently in the shadows while keeping audiences laughing - that balance for which Mr. Foster's plays are so well loved.

One is constantly learning, as Ms. Laughlin noted, by just watching actors on stage and how they really work through developing their characters, specifically for the character Robert.

'Comedy gold,' she called it.

The dialogue bounces from here to there. Robert is a super challenging role for any actor, in her opinion, going in one direction and then winding up in another.

'I think also Ceirin is trying to play him as real a person as you can, to show at the moment that eight-year-old giddiness - but kids have depth - and he is also a man who has actually had sex. His mother worries that scarred him,' she said.

In her own role as the director, she has been trying to help the actor find the balance between the little boy and the man.

The actors performing Kiss the Moon, Kiss the Sun for this CTHP production are all aficionados of community theatre and they perform or volunteer otherwise in many of the several theatres in this broader area.

Jennifer Bartrum is back as Doctor Andrews and Jack Brooks, whom you may have seen at Century Church Theatre, is here playing Holly's less-than-keen boyfriend.

Agreeing that community theatre improves the cultural content of communities, Ms. Laughlin, having participated in community theatre for some years, says she is sure they would be "poorer without them."

While she has been busy with various projects, as a side note Ms. Laughlin mentioned that she has as well written a children's book, *The Hunt for Eddie's Treasure*, illustrated by Emma Pink and published with Kindle.

There is an audio recording of it featuring her actor daughter, Victoria Laughlin, doing the narration and all the voices.

People should come to see the show as it is a lovely touching story. The relationship between the mother and her son and between a new friend will make you laugh and cry.

"Best of all," Laughlin declared happily, "theatre is back. These theatre groups have suffered and closed their doors. All these people have suffered not doing what they love, transporting audiences to a different world."

"People need that," she is sure. "All the people who have contributed to the arts are colouring our lives."

There are a total of six shows, including two matinees.

Show dates " March 25, 26th, April 1 and 2 at 8:15 p.m., March 26 and April 2 at 2:15 p.m.

Dinner Theatre " March 26 and April 2 at 8:15 p.m.

For tickets go to www.caledontownhallplayers.com

For dinner theatre tickets call (519) 927-5460

Masks must be worn in the theatre at all times. Dinner theatre attendees also must show proof of vaccination.