

Drinking Habits causes lots of laughs at Townhall Players

By Bill Rea

There's really nothing new about mixing wine and religion, but it is possible to go too far.

That can be the making of a farce, such as the wildly funny *Drinking Habits*, which is currently being presented by the Caledon Townhall Players.

Written by Tom Smith, directed by Stephanie Bailey and produced by Chris Bailey, the play is set in a convent occupied by a few nuns who are fearful they are going to be closed for being insignificant. Two enterprising nuns, Sister Philamena (played by Teresa Duncan) and Sister Augusta (Jeannette Massicotte), concentrate on their sewing while making wine on the side with the help of George the groundskeeper (Rui Medeiros). They also have to work very hard to keep the activity from Mother Superior (Ingrid Chambers), who condemns even the mention of alcohol. Indeed, the nuns have to come up with alternate terms, such as 'Satan's mouthwash' or 'Lucifer's libations,' or 'Satan's toilet water,' when referring to the real stuff.

Enter two reporters, Paul and Sally (Steve Redford and Danielle Gamache) who are investigating whether or not there is actually wine making going on. It's also quickly obvious the two have a past, involving each other.

'When I dream about kissing you, we're not both dressed like nuns,' Paul remarks at one point.

There are also adventures involving the arrival of Sister Mary Catherine (Lia Strazzeri) at the convent, as she tries to figure out what's going on, and the appearance of Father Chenille (Mark Chambers), who's obsessed with the thought that he's about to be replaced.

The stage is set for plenty of confusion, along with spying, suspicions, disguises (including a bit of cross-dressing), smashed bottles, trying to keep the wine separate from the grape juice and mistaken identities, all wrapping up with coincidences on top of coincidences, with quite a bit of wine consumption thrown in.

The set for this play is very plain and basic, appropriate, considering it's set in a convent. It was designed by the Baileys and built by them, along with Redford, Chambers, Medeiros, John Rowe and Colin Lewis. It allows for lots of freedom of movement, which becomes very important to the story at times. The first act ends with several minutes of rapid and hilarious pantomime.

Performances of *Drinking Habits* are scheduled for tomorrow (Friday) and Saturday evenings, with curtain at 8:15 p.m. There's also a matinee Saturday at 2:15 p.m.

Call the Box Office at 519-927-5460 for ticket reservations.



The cast of *Drinking Habits* includes Rui Medeiros as George, Lia Strazzeri as Sister Mary Catherine, Mark Chambers as Father Chenille, Ingrid Chambers as Mother Superior, Danielle Gamache as Sally, Steve Redford as Paul, Jeannette Massicotte as Sister Augusta and Teresa Duncan as Sister Philamena. Photo by Bill Rea