

Great Barrington Public Theatre, Great Barrington, MA
Just Another Day by Dan Lauria. Directed by James Glossman.
Reviewed by J. Peter Bergman.

“Your crudeness is only exceeded by your ignorance.”

Two people meet on a park bench and wooing begins. The same two people meet again another day and the wooing begins. It happens, it seems, every day; the same two people, the same bench. They are kept apart by a woman in white with a bell that rings everytime they get close. We never see the woman, we only hear about her. Where are these three people, who are they and what were they to one another at another time. We learn a lot about them in Dan



Dan Lauria, Jodi Long; Photo: Cat Humes

Lauria’s new play, “Just Another Day,” now on stage at Simon’s Rock College of Bard in Great Barrington, Massachusetts in the Great Barrington Public Theater’s production.

The play has wit and it has chops. It has a sense of danger and a depth of romance. There is much talk of sex, of old movies, of the various intellectual pastimes the two have shared or at least had individually, but there is very little about the two

of them in real time. They, and the situation remain an enigma. One thing is remarkably clear, though: they are attracted to one another in many ways, some unspoken but observed.

Jodi Long is the Woman. She possesses a fragility that can stand up to Dan Lauria’s Man with ease and comfort. She is supposed to be in her seventies in this play and still possess a high level of sexuality that flows easily in her deceptively intellectual verbal styling. She never directly divulges personal secrets, but she is always a hint of herself. This is a remarkable performance of a difficult role presented as easily as melted ice cream might be served on too hot a day.

Dan Lauria plays the Man, a character he has created. Man has created himself as a haughty character obsessed with his own sexuality at age 70. His repeated attempts to create a sensual relationship with Long’s Woman is at first amusing but grows to disturbing and then evolves to tedious in its one-tone styling. When it is revealed that he believes they may have, at

one time, been married so much becomes clear. The woman in white, never seen, becomes a sort of “keeper” or nurse devoted to the two of them and their mental issues. They are so dissimilar types that the idea of a close, intimate relationship between them turns into both bogus and real and Hollywood oriented.



Jodi Long, Dan Lauria; Photo: Cat Humes

Under James Glossman’s original direction, followed closely here for this production, these two actors have a grand time playing out this extraordinary friendship. There is an ease about Man and Woman that plays against their situation. If they have only just met, as the first act presents them, how is it that they have such a vibrant and violent rapport? What is the purpose of their having been placed on this bench at the same time? Are they supposed to court one another for some specific purpose? Is sex the answer to the harder questions? We never get answers, but we can assume we understand the drive

here and we can move forward with them as they discover their commonalities.

In two acts and an epilogue Man and Woman move through time to a point where life has new meaning for them even if they don’t understand the whys and wherefores of their situation. For all its peculiarities the play leaves its audience with hope for a brighter future, not just for these two but for ourselves as well. A theater experience can’t give you much more than that. Can it? I don’t know. And I don’t have anyone I know to ask. Hmmm.

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Just Another Day plays at the McConnell Theatre at Bard College at Simon’s Rock through August 13. For information and tickets go to GreatBarringtonPublicTheater.org or call 413-372-1980.



Dan Lauria, Jodi Long; Photo: Cat Humes