

UNQUALIFIED THEATER REVIEW

Rumor has it: 'Rumors' was a hit



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Another semester, another theater production by the DMC Drama Department and another production review that I am completely unqualified to write. This time we are taking a look at the over the top absurdist comedy, "Rumors."

"Rumors" is a farce, and I mean that in a literal sense. A farce, as the name implies, is a comedic play that relies on nonsense and the absurd.

"Rumors" follows Chris and Ken Gorman as they attempt to navigate the possible attempted suicide of Charlie Brock, the disappearance of his wife Myra Brock, and a growing cast of increasingly dysfunctional characters.

Following in the footsteps of last semester, I decided to attend the Nov. 16 showing at the end of a very long and stressful day. This meant that I had the unfortunate fortune of attending the production while also suffering from a splitting headache. It was not my brightest moment, I do admit. Yet it was not one that I can say I regret.

The play starts halfway into the rising action. From the moment the first line is spoken to the intermission between the acts, the stage is dominated by an atmosphere of panic and yelling. The entire act consists of a web of lies and cover-ups for those lies, growing ever larger with each new character introduced.

Mia Dobbins and Brennan Bellows, who played Chris and Ken, respectively, perfectly played their characters' dysfunction and constant lapses in basic common sense. By far, they offered one of the most accurate portrayals of people way

in over their heads and acting under way too much pressure that I have seen, even when compared to professional media.

By the end of the first act, the cast has grown to a party of eight, each with their own colorful personalities and unique quirks.

We were also introduced to a trio of new faces in the Del Mar College theater troupe: Kimberly Porfirio as Claire Ganz, Miguel Cerda as Glenn Cooper and Alexa DeLeon as Cassie Cooper. Though I am sure this is not their first rodeo, they certainly demonstrate that they are as good as any of the veteran members of the cast. If Del Mar is lucky, we will get to see more of them come next semester.

As with last semester, the costumes were wonderfully made. A personal favorite of mine were those of the Cusacks. Ernie, played by Sam Howarth, donned an eccentric and multi-colored suit that contrasted well with his unusually grounded character. Cookie, played by Erin Heflin, and her 60-year-old Russian dress matched well with the character's somewhat bohemian personality. I must also admit, I do have a bias and love for older, more cultural clothing.

An honorable mention in the costume department would have to go to Lenny Ganz,

played by Edwardo Alejandro, at the very end of the second act. His random ensemble consisting of a bathrobe, pajamas and bandages really helped sell his monologue. Though, that might just be Alejandro's own personality bleeding through into the clothing department.

The set was itself a star in the production. It was so well made that I began wondering if it was for rent, though I was later informed that it was largely 2D and, in fact, a stage set. Regardless, the stage crew and carpenters, which included a number of the acting cast, brought the Brock household to life.



Mia Dobbins
played a central
role as Chris
Gorman.



Sam Howarth
played the
eccentric but
rational Ernie
Cusack.



Kimberly Porfirio, who played Claire Ganz in the Drama Department's production of "Rumors," engages with friends and audience members during the Student Appreciation Day Meet and Greet.

Now comes the hard part: my criticisms. I have very few if any to offer the cast and crew of the Del Mar Drama Department. They each did a wonderful job throughout the entire production, even in areas where I thought the material of the play itself fell short. Due to the nature of a farce, many of the jokes and lines appeared to be thrown at the wall and not all of them stuck.

One particular example would be in the second act, when Cookie interrupts the scene after believing she had lost her earrings, only to find


that they were in her hand the entire time. Heflin's energy and acting abilities carried the moment, but in the end, it didn't really add much to the scene or story as a whole. It got a laugh out of the audience, but once the initial absurdity had passed, it was almost entirely forgotten.

Overall, despite my head splitting, I found myself laughing at almost every opportunity. Even when I was flinching from the sensory overload caused by the screaming and panic, I could not remove the smile from my face from beginning to end.


While a review of "it could kill you and you'd die happy" is unorthodox, I believe that it is fitting for such an unorthodox show.



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'It was the creepiest photo I had ever seen'

Professor shares how old family picture led to an important realization

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One second, that's how long it takes for your life to change in an instant — enough to change the course of history, of a whole generation.

That ideology is what author Sarah Lenz attributed the reasoning behind her book's creation at her Nov. 14 book signing in the Reading Lab on Heritage Campus.

For Lenz, assistant professor of English at DMC, it all started when her father handed her one particular creepy photo.

"It was the creepiest photo I had ever seen. It depicts my three great uncles all propped up in a row in their coffins. They were all killed by the same strike of lightning in 1914," Lenz said.

As Lenz later discovered, her own great-grandfather was supposed to be in that barn with the rest of her great uncles.

To her, she was astonished by the fact that she was essentially one lightning strike away from ceasing to exist.

Lenz's book, titled "What Will Outlast Me," is her own personal essay collection touching on themes such as facing mortality, learning how to grieve and discovering the true meaning behind the question of what, or who, will outlast us.

Lenz ultimately realized that it's our loved ones that outlast us in the end.

"The inevitable answer I come up with is, well what will outlast me is those that I love, because my memory will continue in their lives," Lenz said.

Her book has been recognized as notable in Best American Essays three times, and is available for purchase online through Barnes and Noble or Amazon.



Lenz's "What Will Outlast Me" is available for purchase online through Barnes and Noble or Amazon.