

'Pocatello' a place you definitely want to visit

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'Pocatello' a heartwarming, funny play about a dysfunctional family and a dying community

Two Jews On Film

'Pocatello' a funny, touching play by The Rogue Machine Theatre,

Rating: ★★★★★

There are certain theatre companies in Los Angeles that never disappoint. **The Rogue Machine** theatre company is definitely one of those. With their latest production of 'Pocatello' written by award winning playwright, Samuel D. Hunter, they once again prove this to be true.

'Pocatello' opened off Broadway in New York city at Playwrights Horizons in 2014 to rave reviews and it's easy to see why.. This is a funny, heartbreaking play about family, secrets and the disappearing of small town businesses that hold communities together.

The two families in 'Pocatello' are what you would call dysfunctional, but it doesn't matter, because you can't help but care about every one of them. The play takes place in an Italian chain restaurant during 'Famiglia Week' where the manager, Eddie (played beautifully by Matthew Elkins) a lovable, lonely guy, who despite his smiling demeanor, is holding on for dear life. Eddie lives with secrets. He is gay and the restaurant, unbeknownst to the employees, is about to close.

The loyal diners of this dying restaurant, includes Eddie's best friend, Troy (Justin Okin) who is trying with everything is has to keep his unhappy family together. His wife, Tammy (Tracie Lockwood) is an alcoholic, who takes every opportunity to verbalize her dissatisfaction for her life. Their daughter, Becky (Eden Brolin) is your basically normal teenager, except for the fact that she has an eating disorder and an obsession with genocide.

We also get to know Eddie's widowed mother, Doris (Anne Gee Byrd) who appears to be oblivious to Eddie's unhappiness, as well as his older brother, Nick (Rob Nagle) who wants to be anywhere except sitting down to dinner with his family.

Through Eddie, who now feels a stranger in a town he once loved, we discover the families' guilt, anger, shame and their social isolation that plague them do to all the things that they have left unsaid. What makes us route so hard for Eddie is watching him trying so hard to connect to the people he loves and how he clings to the belief

that somehow, things will get better.

'Pocatello' is directed by John Perrin Flynn who is also the artistic director of the Rogue Machine Company. He does an excellent job of bringing out spot on performances by everyone of the cast.

'Pocatello' opened at the Rogue's new home, The Met Theatre located at 1089 Oxford Avenue in Los Angeles and it runs until Sunday April 10th. Performances are Friday and Saturday at 8:30pm and Sunday at 3:00. Tickets are \$34.00. For reservations, please call 855-585-5185. The play closes this weekend. Do not miss it.



Joan and John Schwartz
LA Theater Reviews Examiner