



Thursday, 28 September 2017 09:23

## "Stupid Kid" at the Road Theatre Company

Written by Javier Ronceros

*I recently attended the world premiere of "Stupid Kid" at the Road Theatre Company on Magnolia. The play was written by Sharr White and directed by Cameron Watson.*

I love this theatre. It shares a space with the NoHo Senior Arts Colony and the atmosphere of the theatre is warm, professional and inviting. I have seen several plays at this venue and have always left more than satisfied, and the new play "Stupid Kid" is no exception.

The play begins completely in the dark with a raunchy guitar riff, suddenly the lights come up on a living room belonging to a "flat broke" Eastern Colorado family. From this point forward the dialogue and emotions are flying at the audience with an intensity and speed that made me feel I was right on stage with them. Chip, expertly played by Ben Theobald, is released a day early from prison after spending 14 years for a crime he swears he didn't commit. His mother, Gigi, played by the always brilliant, Taylor Gilbert, is not quite as happy to see him as you would think a mother should be. Chip's father, Eddie, played by Joe Hart, who reminded me of the great Art Carney, seems confused and thrown slightly out of time by the appearance of his son, which is a fascinating and very real interpretation of a painful situation.

I have to stop here and praise the scenic designer, Jeff McLaughlin and the equally talented Jared A. Sayeg for his lighting design for placing us so perfectly in the home and the backyard of the Hawker residence.

The writing is top notch and even though there was a lot of information to process, the actors, with the help of the deftly written dialogue, kept it all clear and believable. There were moments where I was afraid to laugh because the subject matter was so dark, but that's what happens when plays are written and directed this well... you have permission to laugh and be horrified. Special mentions go out to Rob Nagle who played Uncle Mike with delicious villainy, and Michelle Gillette who played the neighbor next door nobody wants, Fanny Hawker.

As well as Allison Blaize who played Hazel with such touching vulnerability that you could feel her pain.

Every play I have seen at The Road, at either location, has been wonderful, so it's no surprise that "Stupid Kid" is so brilliant and I strongly recommend that you make sure to book your tickets soon.

"Stupid Kid" runs from September 22-November 12 at The Road on Magnolia and promises a great evening out and perhaps more of an appreciation of your own family and their particular peculiarities, especially compared to Chip's family's distinctly disturbing 'normal'.