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The House of Yes

TheatreRats presents a revival of Wendy MacLeod's play, *The House of Yes*. The following description is from the show's press release: "The story is fairly simple. Jackie loved Marty. Marty left Jackie. Jackie shot Marty. Oh...and they're twins. Fast forward one year...Marty is bringing home his new fiancée at Thanksgiving to meet the family—aristocratic, faux-French Mom; forgotten brother Anthony; and of course, Jackie. What follows is equal parts hilarity and horror, as the family slowly but surely unravels to reveal its darkest secrets."

nytheatre.com review

Anthony C.E. Nelson · April 28, 2007

TheatreRats' production of Wendy MacLeod's slight but amusing play *The House of Yes* is just that; a slight but amusing diversion with a couple of notable successes.

The play takes place entirely in the gloomy Washington, D.C. area mansion of the dysfunctional Pascal clan, who are deeply entwined in the city's political gossip and fixated on the Kennedys in particular. On this night, young Jackie-O is in a frenzy as she prepares the house for the return of her brother Marty from college. Her busy excitement is interrupted by the news that Marty is bringing home his fiancée Lesly, a fact that Jackie's mother and brother Anthony have tried to shield her from. Jackie, you see, has a shadowy past involving a number of breakdowns, and an unnatural fixation on Marty.

The stage is set for dynamic family drama, which occurs as Marty and Lesly arrive soaked to the skin from the hurricane that is going on outside. Lesly, of course, is not the debutante that this family expects, but a simple girl employed at a Donut King franchise. She is taken aback by the opulence of the family's home, but this fish-out-

VENUE

[Medicine Show](#)

OPENED

April 26, 2007

CLOSES

May 5, 2007

PERFORMANCES

Thu - Sat at 8pm; Sat at 2pm

RUNNING TIME

1 hour, 20 minutes
No intermission

TICKETS

\$18

[Make a reservation via email](#)

MORE INFO

[Visit the company's official website](#)

CAST

Christina Brucato, Sarah Burns, Nick Mitchell, Gerry Sheridan, Zac Springer

AUTHOR

Wendy MacLeod

DIRECTOR

Lauren Reinhard

SETS

Alexis M. Hadsall

LIGHTING

Mike Gugliotti

COSTUMES

David Withrow

SOUND

Jay Varner & Lauren

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of-water angle isn't really explored in MacLeod's script. The playwright instead is more interested in the twisted lines of affection that link the play's four young people, as Lesly immediately senses something sexual in the air between Jackie-O and Marty, making her susceptible to the puppy-dog affections of the virgin Anthony, who has theoretically dropped out of Princeton to care for his sister but doesn't seem to do much besides yell at her to take her meds from time to time.

The play's plot is thin, but fun, as Jackie-O does her best to draw Marty back into their days of hinted-at incest. There's not a lot of suspense in this comic drama, so the fun comes from tightly drawn, absurd characters and wisecracks, which this production certainly has in abundance. The ensemble have all created believable eccentrics (Nick Mitchell's squealing younger brother is the most fully realized of the bunch, full of energy and glee at his siblings' failings), but unfortunately Christina Brucato seems to be skimming the surface of Jackie-O, and we don't see in her the intensity that she needs to drive this play to its conclusion.

Director Lauren Reinhard and set designer Alexis M. Hadsall have done a fabulous job creating the impression of an opulent mansion with little more than a variety of furniture and one simple platform. Lighting designer Mike Gugliotti also contributes by adding a gloomy tone to the setting. Reinhard keeps the pace moving admirably and deals beautifully with the farcical appearances of the characters, but should probably focus on her actors' timing and making sure all the verbal witticisms are given space to land. Costume designer David Withrow makes some odd choices: the script specifically calls for Jackie-O's Halloween recreation of her namesake to be spattered with bits of macaroni brains and it is not, and Sarah Burns (Lesly) is saddled with a truly bizarre hairdo.

MacLeod's play doesn't have a lot of depth to it and it takes a very strong production to keep you from realizing this while watching it, and TheatreRats does not quite accomplish that. But they do create a quick and enjoyable evening with some memorable performances and a number of laugh-out-loud moments.

[Print this review.](#)

Reinhard

STAGE MANAGER

Marta Tejada

PROPS

Rachel Grundy

PRODUCING COMPANY

TheatreRats

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