

SUN STAR

'Three Days of Rain' surprisingly good

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By KAY KOERNER
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"Three Days of Rain" is easily one of the best performances by the UAF Theatre Department in years.

The actors were inspired, the set design was clever, and the choice of play was, for once, not a rhetorical post-modern elitist drama like "Waiting for Godot" or "Oleanna."

"This was one of the most emotionally charged plays I've seen in a long time," said political science sophomore Mariah Acton, who went to the sold out performance on Saturday.

The play consists of two acts. The first takes place in the 1990s.

Three adults, Walker, Nan, and Pip, are trying to understand the lives of their parents and in doing so discover their own identity.

Senior theater student Jon-Kiefer Bowne perfectly captured the lunacy and the senseless of Walker.

His confusion and grief over the loss of his father and his mother's insanity was easily understood by the audience that could not help but sympathize with him.

Nan, Walker's older sister, was played by junior Jenny Schlotfeldt.

Her nervously roving fingers stilled only when she wasn't in turmoil because Walker ran off again. Love for her brother and admiration of Pip shone from Schlotfeldt's eyes.

Levi Ben-Israel embodied the perpetually happy yet insightful character Pip who is mocked for being a beefcake named "Butte" in a soap opera.

Ben-Israel's easy smiles and cocky grin capture Pip in a way that makes spectators aware of the depth of the character while at the same time understanding that life is much too easy for him.

He can get whatever he wants, and he wants only what he can get.

In the second act, which is set in the 60's Bowne, Schlotfeldt and Ben-Israel became Ned, Lina and Theo, the parents of Walker, Nan and Pip.

Bowne brilliantly stuttered his speech to the point where simple sentences became brutal and twitchy.

It seemed like he was forcing the words out in spite of his lips.



Kay Koerner / Sun Star

Levi Ben-Israel and Jon-Kiefer Bowne dynamically oppose each other as Theo and Ned in "Three Days of Rain" on Dec. 18.

His shoulders were perpetually hunched as further proof of Ned's self consciousness and self loathing.

Ned's business partner Theo was the opposite of his son Pip.

Ben-Israel used body language and attitude to show how Theo put others down to get what he wanted in life. Despite Theo's shortcomings he was not evil enough to for the audience to no feel sorry for him when Lina ran off with his friend.

Ben-Israel walked across the stage a broken man, with a failed career and unlucky in love.

The ill-fated Lina was played expertly by Schlotfeldt, who sugarcoated

a southern accent achieving a result somewhere between Scarlett O'Hara and Blanche DuBois.

Though it was hard to understand why she fell for Ned, fall she did.

One rainy day when Theo was away trying to be brilliant they wound up in bed together. Ned circled the event in his diary, writing simply, "Three Days of Rain."

Alison Deal, a 17-year-old student at Lathrop High also enjoyed the performance.

"I thought it was really well done, you could easily tell the difference between the characters even though they were the same actors," she said. "The play was mostly talking but it still kept you entertained."