

Ontario Arts Review



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It is by the interest & support of culture that a community is truly defined—E. T. Metter, 1990

21 MAR 2015

“The Last Five Years”; powerful recap of a relationship [Reply](#)

by Ontario Arts Review • Musical, Play, Theatre

Review by **Danny Gaisin**

Creative Writing 101 teaches that any article or missive must start with a ‘hook’ to capture a reader’s attention. Same goes for live theatre and Daemon’s director *Carl Pucl*’s take on the Jason Brown autobiography “THE LAST FIVE YEARS” exemplifies this dictate perfectly. From within the audience’s Stage-right entry of Cathy, to the egress by her partner, ‘Jamie’ on the opposite side; attention is grabbed and firmly held until curtain 90 minutes later.



He’s looking to a future; she’s looking at him...the basis of THE LAST FIVE YEARS

A stark yet dramatic stage with a backdrop of random shapes; spectators meet *Kaleigh Gorka*’s WASPish Cathy sing-citing about her just ended relationship...she’s “still hurting” and the empathy she gleans is almost tangible. Gorka has a powerful soprano voice with just a soupçon of tremolo that viscerally impacts on every listener. Coupled with an expressively mobile face that’s also traffic-stopping pretty, she is a perfect casting choice. Then *Josh Wiles* solos with his joy at finally meeting his ‘Shiksa* Goddess’ after a long bout of dating “JAPs*”. She’s an aspiring actress; he’s writing a book. Wiles captures every nuance of his character including the devotion and affinity that grows; matures and finally withers. He has previously received positive mention in these pages for a strong portrayal in *Midsummer Night’s Dream* (2013) and a convincing soliloquy written by Noel Coward for his “demi-Monde’. Wiles has lost none of the thespian talent he gleaned at UTM & Sheridan. Two such talents are a must to carry out the intricacies of both the play’s motif and the artistic hypothesis of the director. Pucl’s perception of Brown’s relationship with his wife Theresa O’Neill was so vivid as to require changes in order to fend off a lawsuit. So, the director actually makes Gorka’s Cathy the most interesting and certainly most sympathetic character. Any parent will feel a strong urge to hold her close:



"25th ANNUAL PUTNAM
County SPELLING BEE",
staged by & at Drury
Lane, Burl'n. Opening
May 5th

HAMILTON
PHILHARMONIC, with
guest soloist Lara
St.John. *hint*, she's a
super musician -
shouldn't be missed.
Sat. May. 6th 7:30 @
Great Hall.

"SISTER ACT", staged by
Ham'n Theatre Ins. 140
McNab. St. N; May 12th -
27th.

MUSIC COLLECTIVE,
fund-raiser for
Instruments for Kids.
Hepner All-Stars; David
Clayton-Thomas; Vocals
by Gigi Marentette. @
Shawn & Ed Brewing, 65
Hatt St, Dundas May 25th

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...impulsive character may prefer him looking large to looking small,
 pat her back and say 'things will work out', or words to that effect. Its
 borderline credible that Wiles' Jamie would ever look elsewhere no matter
 how wide the chasm between their career progressions differs. The
 immaculate detailing; effective blocking and formidable support from both
 sound and light make this effort a true gem. Pucl's delicate and restrained
 wedding scene displays both principals at their finest.
 The costuming by Julia Lee reflects the changing statuses of the relationship
 as well as subtly mirroring the relative positions of the protagonists. Doug
 Price's five-piece orchestra never overpowers and is technically faultless.
 THE LAST FIVE YEARS is another of those rare gems that become a *must-see*
 experience and as it closes this evening, *if you've snoozed; you've
 loozed!*

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