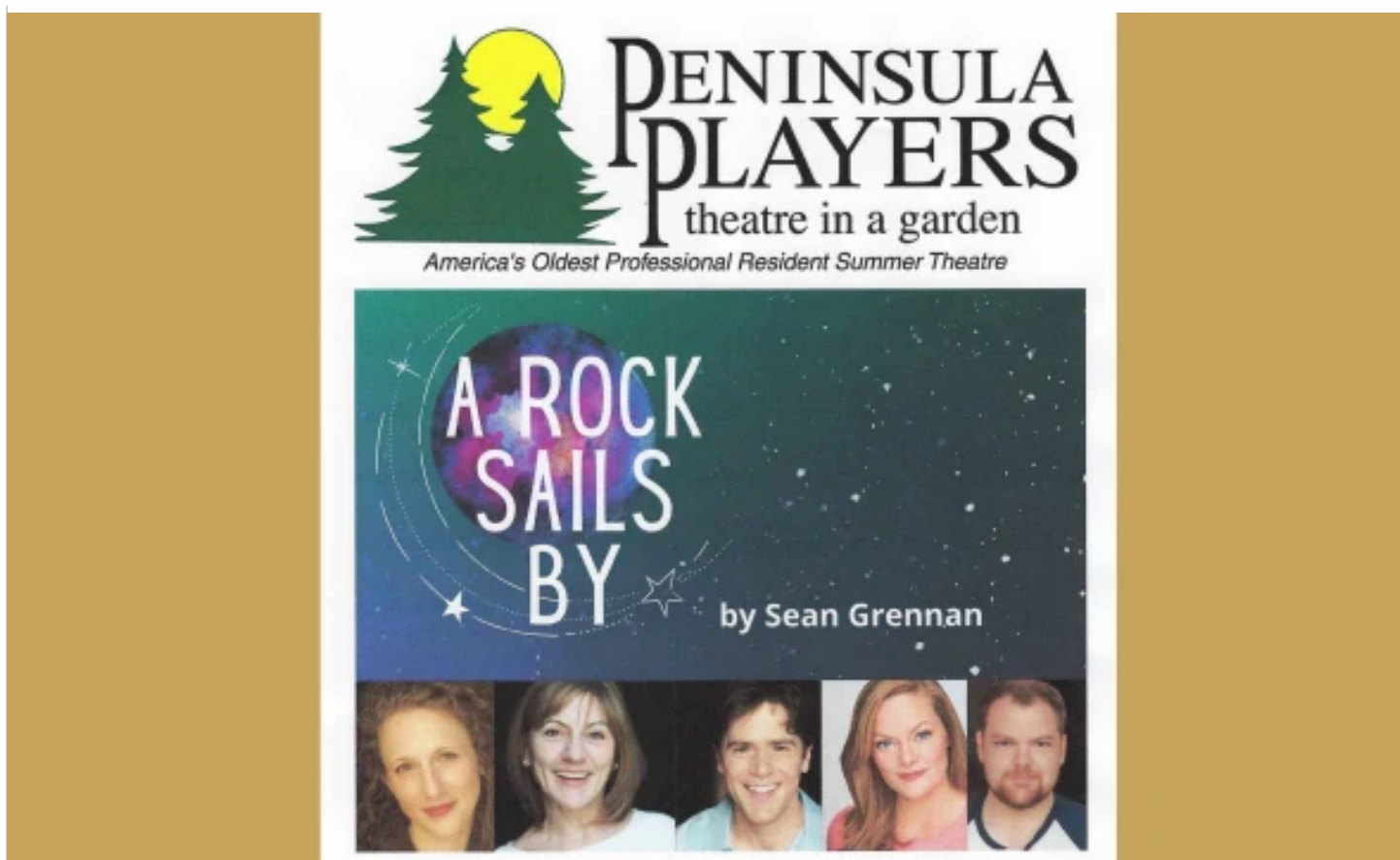


45°



Production image.

Peninsula Players Theatre

by: [Warren Gerds](#), Contact me at warren.gerds@wearegreenbay.com. Watch for my on-air Critic at Large editions every Sunday during the 5:30-7:30 a.m. broadcast on WFRV-TV, Channel 5.

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BAILEYS HARBOR, Wis. (WFRV) – News the other day said scientists discovered a star 13

billion light years distant from Earth.

Implications of that are a challenge for mere mortals to wrap their head around.

Astroscience and mortality and faith and much more are in a new play that was presented Monday night and is available briefly yet online – “A Rock Sails By.”

Professional actors with Peninsula Players Theatre enacted the play as part of a winter play reading series that sometimes gives plays a test run before future full production at the Door County theater, now in its 87th season.

Plays by Sean Grennan, the author of “A Rock Sails By,” have received world premieres at the Players, so new work by him certainly is considered seriously.

As well it should.

Sean Grennan has a way with words and thoughts and making them like a turbine producing electricity.

Plays take us anywhere. Nothing is improbable. In “A Rock Sails By,” it’s into the life of a respected astroscientist whose life of finding answers has gotten to the watershed of “I want to know what the point is.” Being.

Lynn Cummings is a widow who listens over and over to her husband’s finale telephone message to her.

Her daughter has a doctorate in English and, unlike her mother, believes in an afterlife.

News of a something like a comet accelerating toward Earth has brought a journalist calling on Lynn, the result of which is her being quoted out of context and into the crosshairs of losing her job and respectability.

And then there’s Lynn’s diagnosis of early stage dementia.

And then ... for me to say would give too much of the play away for future audiences.

However, I can write about the result, which is:

Sean Grennan writes the “and then” with such finesse that mortality is weighed beautifully, giving deep pause. It is only a play, but the experience is profound. In it are life, death, love, no-nonsense science, firm faith, slipshod journalism, wonders of the sky, the beauties of being, ugliness in life, the power of science, the power of imagination, the power of well-crafted words.

“A Rock Sails By” also leaves wonder about dementia, too.

The play was read for an audience Monday night at Bjorklunden lodge, with a recorded audio version that sound like a rehearsal run-through being what I heard online, and still available today, Tuesday, April 5.

Whether “A Rock Sails By” will make it to the stage remains to be seen.

This and that from the play:

Lynn Cummings is a cussed soul. She rips into the journalist, Jason, who has messed up her life with his story. “I have integrity,” he says. “You should bring it to work sometime,” she says.

Her daughter, Olive, adds to a famous line, noting her mother “Gladly makes fools suffer.”

Lynn has photographic memory, is a hardliner who cares for her family, views humanity as “uppity bacteria” and has come to a stage where her scientific mind says, “I want to know what the point is.”

Running time: *One hour, 37 minutes*

Remaining online option: *to 7 p.m. April 5 CDT – info: onthestage.com/peninsula-players-theatre*

Creative: *Playwright – Sean Grennan; director – Linda Fortunato*

Cast (from left in image above):

Player 1 – Cassandra Bissell

Dr. Lynn Cummings – Janet Ulrich Brooks

Jason – Neil Brookshire

Olive – Erica Elam

Player 2 – Dan Klarer

Narrator (not in photo) – Linda Fortunato

NEXT (regular season): “The Rainmaker,” June 14-July 3; “Write Me a Murder,” July 6-24; “Ripcord,” July 27-Aug. 14; “I and You,” Aug. 17-Sept. 4; “Murder for Two,” Sept. 7-Oct. 16.

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