

Review: A ROCK SAILS BY at Theatre Harrisburg

Check out this regional premiere through September 17th!

By: [Andrea Stephenson](#) Sep. 09, 2023



[Sean Grennan](#)'s new play *A Rock Sails By* explores the questions that we ponder to which we may never know the answers. Is there life beyond our planet? What happens after death? Why is life, in all its beauty, filled with fear, anger, and hatred? And, perhaps one of the most complicated questions, what's the point? The play tells the story of Dr. Lynn Cummings, an astrophysicist who learns that she has dementia; her daughter Olive; a young journalist, Jason; and a mysterious Messenger. It is a thought-provoking story filled with wit, humor, and emotion. *A Rock Sails By* opens the 98th season at Theatre Harrisburg under the direction of Eric Pope through September 17th.

The set, lighting, sound, and costumes are beautifully designed and add to the realism of the story while also serving to illuminate the themes of the show—outer-space, the Earth, and the mind. The projection and sound design by Brydon Lidle IV is particularly stunning. The small cast includes Jackie Dougherty (Player), Patty Cole (Player), Tyquan Reddick (Jason), Chelsea Nasatka (Olive Cummings), Chris Koslosky (Dr. Lynn Cummings), and Greg Koslosky (Messenger).

Dougherty and Cole take on multiple roles throughout the show, demonstrating their versatility as actors. Dougherty gives a particularly strong performance as Jason's boss, the head of an online rag whose biggest concern is getting clicks to the detriment of publishing facts. Cole

approaches both of her roles with energy and poise. Her performance as the college Chancellor is wonderfully nuanced and emotional.

Reddick is delightful as Jason—a journalist who hungers for the truth. Reddick has fantastic comedic timing, bringing the witty dialogue to life. Nasatka's performance as Olive is outstanding. Her interactions with Chris Koslosky's Dr. Cummings and Reddick's Jason are heartfelt and engaging. She is utterly believable in her role.

Chris Koslosky and Greg Koslosky are perfectly cast in their roles as Dr. Lynn Cummings and Messenger. Chris Koslosky's performance as Dr. Cummings is emotionally complex and relatable. She interacts beautifully with Nasatka's Olive, making the mother-daughter relationship feel completely genuine. Her ability to invite the audience into Dr. Cummings's struggles with mourning her husband, dealing with her diagnosis, and pondering the big questions is superb. It's difficult to talk about the Messenger without giving away too much of the story. Greg Koslosky's performance is absolutely mesmerizing, as he embodies the character with his movements, facial expressions, and voice.

This production of *A Rock Sails By* one hundred percent deserves the standing ovation it received on opening night. The script is smart, witty, and relatable. The stellar cast and talented production team at Theatre Harrisburg create a beautiful, engaging, and thought-provoking experience for the audience. Get your tickets before it's too late at the link below.

Photo Credit: Marc Faubel @MarcFaubel @HSGuyMarc