



## Burg Review: Theatre Harrisburg deftly explores outer worlds, inner worlds with “A Rock Sails By”

SEPTEMBER 9, 2023 | by Gina Napoli

26

3

0



<https://theburgnews.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/A-Rock-Sails-By-web.jpg> There’s a rock hurtling towards earth. Its movements don’t fit any of the patterns astrophysicists are used to seeing. But Dr. Cummings isn’t at all worried about alien life visiting earth. She’s more

worried about the metaphorical rocks hurling toward her, disrupting her personal orbit.

Theatre Harrisburg’s moving, dramatic season opener, “A Rock Sails By,” from playwright Sean Grennan, encounters us with questions about not only life forms in outer space, but

also serious end-of-life questions. What happens to us after we die? And what is the point of all this living we do? Or the question Director Eric Pope poses: “Shouldn’t we be more concerned about life here on this rock?”

These issues weigh heavily on Dr. Lynn Cummings (Chris Koslosky), an astrophysicist with an eidetic memory. Every now and again, she can feel herself going into trance-like states. They affect her work as a professor, a mother, and as a license-holding driver. She doesn’t quite yet know what the trances are. As a scientist, she relies only on what she can prove for sure, and she doesn’t fill in the blanks with stories – especially not stories about life on other planets that would make her a laughingstock in her professional community.

With so many mysteries of life, Cummings is comfortable in not knowing. But outside forces compel her to dig further into the possibility of alien life forms. She begrudgingly becomes entangled with Jason (Tyquan Reddick), a pushy journalist who has a complicated relationship with truth and ethics. Together with her daughter, Olive (Chelsea Nasatka), the three embark on an unlikely journey to New Mexico to watch a potentially alien rock sail by earth.

Koslosky brings the audience a know-it-all protagonist who isn’t always likable, but develops her humanity and vulnerability as the play moves along. That softer side of Cummings helps the audience to identify with the mostly insufferably condescending scientist. It’s a long fall from her high horse – a horse as tall as the cosmos stretch. In contrast, Reddick plays Jason as a more reserved personality, but still not backing down from his beliefs or his right to be open-minded about outer space.

If this play were a video on my flick feed, there would be a caption reading “Wait for it.” The payoff scene near the end takes the form of a Messenger (Greg Koslosky) whose presence demands Cummings to unblock and tap in to the feeling part of herself that she hides from the world. Mission accomplished to Greg Koslosky for birthing a character whose presence creates the appropriate amount of ambiguity, with more questions than answers. It’s a compelling storyline that will provide you plenty of fodder for “Act 3 Dissection” with your plus-one after the curtain falls.

I didn’t catch on until I read the cast notes that this production has a cast of mostly novices to Theatre Harrisburg. The play’s cohesive, theater-family-style casting misled me completely, and I don’t mind being wrong about that thing. A special round of applause to Nasatka, walking onstage for her first debut performance anywhere, ever.

If you're looking to explore any sort of finite theory or have your questions answered about alien life, end of life, or what happens after life, this script doesn't tie a bow on anything for anyone. If you like nice, tidy endings to your fiction stories, this play isn't the place to find one. Like Cummings, you'll need to get comfortable with not knowing. But what you will glean is a message to take a bite out of life while we have it.

*"A Rock Sails By" runs through Sept. 17 at the Krevsky Center, 513 Hurlock St., Harrisburg. For more information on show times and tickets, visit <https://theatreharrisburg.com/shows/a-rock-sails-by/> (<https://theatreharrisburg.com/shows/a-rock-sails-by/>).*

**If you like what we do, please support our work. Become a Friend of TheBurg!** (<https://theburgnews.com/friends-of-theburg>)

26

3

0

## You May Also Like

---



[Burg Review: Theatre Harrisburg deftly explores outer worlds, inner worlds with "A Rock Sails By"](https://theburgnews.com/bug-blog/bug-review-theatre-harrisburg-deftly-explores-outer-worlds-inner-worlds-with-a-rock-sails-by) (<https://theburgnews.com/bug-blog/bug-review-theatre-harrisburg-deftly-explores-outer-worlds-inner-worlds-with-a-rock-sails-by>)

September 9, 2023 | by Gina Napoli



[Burg Review: Take your protein pill and jam out to Open Stage's "Space Oddity"](https://theburgnews.com/culture/bug-review-take-your-protein-pill-and-jam-out-to-open-stages-space-oddity) (<https://theburgnews.com/culture/bug-review-take-your-protein-pill-and-jam-out-to-open-stages-space-oddity>)

September 8, 2023 | by Gina Napoli



## [Weekend Roundup with Sara Bozich](https://theburgnews.com/bug-blog/weekend-roundup-with-sara-bozich-344)

[Weekend Roundup with Sara Bozich](https://theburgnews.com/bug-blog/weekend-roundup-with-sara-bozich-344)

September 7, 2023 | by Sara Bozich



## [PA Latino Convention to be held in Harrisburg during Hispanic Heritage Month](https://theburgnews.com/in-the-burg/pa-latino-convention-to-be-held-in-harrisburg-during-hispanic-heritage-month)

September 6, 2023 | by Maddie Gittens



**[THIS MONTH'S PUBLICATION](https://theburgnews.com/months-publication)**  
**[\(HTTPS://THEBURGNEWS.COM/MONTHS-PUBLICATION\)](https://theburgnews.com/months-publication)**

**[DISTRIBUTION LOCATIONS](https://theburgnews.com/distribution-locations)**  
 **[\(HTTPS://THEBURGNEWS.COM/DISTRIBUTION-LOCATIONS\)](https://theburgnews.com/distribution-locations)**

**[ADVERTISE \(HTTPS://THEBURGNEWS.COM/ADVERTISE\)](https://theburgnews.com/advertise)**

**[ARCHIVES \(HTTPS://THEBURGNEWS.COM/ARCHIVES\)](https://theburgnews.com/archives)**

**[CONTACT US \(HTTPS://THEBURGNEWS.COM/CONTACT\)](https://theburgnews.com/contact)**

**[ABOUT \(HTTPS://THEBURGNEWS.COM/ABOUT\)](https://theburgnews.com/about)**

**[3RD IN THE BURG \(HTTPS://THIRDINTHEBURG.ORG/\)](https://thirdintheburg.org/)**

[Site Credits \(https://theburgnews.com/site-credits\)](https://theburgnews.com/site-credits)

[Sitemap \(https://theburgnews.com/sitemap\)](https://theburgnews.com/sitemap)

[Privacy Policy \(https://theburgnews.com/privacy-policy\)](https://theburgnews.com/privacy-policy)

Copyright © 2023. All Rights Reserved

Address: 920 N 3rd Street, Suite 101, Harrisburg, PA 17102

[info@theburgnews.com \(mailto:info@theburgnews.com\)](mailto:info@theburgnews.com)

 [FB \(https://www.facebook.com/TheBurgNews/\)](https://www.facebook.com/TheBurgNews/)

 [TW \(https://twitter.com/TheBurgNews\)](https://twitter.com/TheBurgNews/)