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'Waiting for Godot' by Samuel Beckett

Presented by Atlantic Repertory Company and now on stage at BMO Studio, 112 Princess Street, Saint John, New Brunswick.



Credit: Drew Murdock Pictured: R. H. Thomson and Eric Peterson

Aaron Kropf

“A Groundhog Day treat of a production...Eric Peterson and R. H. Thomson are exciting to watch.”

Saint John audiences have been gifted the opportunity to see two of Canada’s iconic artists perform Samuel Beckett’s masterpiece, ‘Waiting for Godot.’ Only a few weeks ago, Atlantic Repertory Company announced the production and that R. H. Thomson and Eric Peterson would lead the cast as the iconic duo Vladimir and Estragon, respectively. Under the direction of Richard Rose, this production hits many of the right notes.

Samuel Beckett’s ‘Waiting for Godot’ is more about the destination than the wait that Estragon (Eric Peterson) and Vladimir (R. H. Thomson) perpetually make for the elusive Godot. This wait has been interpreted in many ways over the years. During the day, Estragon and Vladimir touch on many topics during their banal banter. Throughout their discussion comes an unexpected pair of travellers on their way to the fair.

Pozzo (Kenzie Delo) controls the silent, dejected Lucky (Patrick Jeffrey). Pozzo controls Lucky with a long rope around Lucky’s neck and a whip. Pozzo stops to chat with the two vagabonds.

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For their conversation Pozzo encourages Vladimir and Estragon to get the mute Lucky to think. At this point, Lucky strings together a series of thoughts, picking up speed during his diatribe. Pozzo and Lucky leave the pair to continue their wait for the elusive Godot, only to be told by one of Godot's boys (Kate Sullivan) that Godot wouldn't be joining them tonight but would be sure to come for them tomorrow.

The show's second half is like the first, giving a Groundhog Day feeling. This time, when Lucky and Pozzo show up, it's clear that Pozzo's fortunes have changed since their encounter with him the night before. Estragon and Vladimir set Pozzo and Lucky on the right course again, only to be informed by Godot's boy, yet again, that Godot will not make it today.

The set for this production consists of a tree centred back of the stage. This tree is little more than a long twig with a few branches. The rock in this production is more of a giant cement slab with stairs on two of the four sides. This was a little surprising and a deviation from the typical Godot production.

A great production depends on the company. With Eric Peterson and R. H. Thomson as Estragon and Vladimir, it's exciting to think of what you'll see before going into the show. Peterson was splendid, always doing something. Estragon seems like it was written for Peterson. Tomson matched Peterson, creating the magic that can only come from two great actors. Kenzie Delo (Pozzo) and Patrick Jeffrey (Lucky) had lovely chemistry if you can say that for this pair. Kate Sullivan (the Boy) seemed a little nervous on opening night. She was a little too quiet, making it difficult to hear her a few times (good thing many of the Boy's lines are simple, yes or no, sir). One thing that seemed to be missing from this production was the infamous pauses riddled throughout Beckett's work. This is a production that seemed to move along at a rapid pace.

Overall, Atlantic Repertory Company's 'Waiting for Godot' is a treat. I'm sure many will have tickets due to Peterson and Thomson because we don't get many performers like these two in Saint John. If this is why you bought your ticket and find you aren't sure what is really going on... sit back and enjoy the ride! This is a Godot worth waiting for.

'Waiting for Godot' runs until Sunday, September 29th, at the BMO Studio Theatre, 112 Princess St. Saint John, NB. Visit <https://saintjohntheatrecompany.com/> or call 506-652-7582 for tickets.

Atlantic Repertory Company presents
Waiting for Godot by Samuel Beckett
Directed by Richard Rose
Set Design: Andrea Evans
Wardrobe: Brenda Mcleese
Lighting Design: Chris Saad
Stage Manager: Teagan Keith

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Performers: Kenzie Delo, Patrick Jeffrey, Eric Peterson, R. H. Thomson, Kate Sullivan