

DUCKS!

by Suzanne Crnic

Duck Sisters
written by Sheldon Rosen
Theatre Plus Toronto

If Imagination could be bottled and sold at the corner drug store, it would be a medicine that would never be in stock.

The *Duck Sisters*, written by Sheldon Rosen, is a hilarious and thought-provoking play that advocates Imagination as a cure for people to get over life's dilemmas.

Carla and Alice, the two central characters, are middle-aged sisters who no longer know what to do with themselves after a shop called the Duck Pond closes.

They sit at their favorite bench every day wearing the duck masks they once wore to entertain children at birthday parties. And, every day Alice continues to convince Carla that aliens are on their way to transport them to another and better planet.

However emotionally attached the sisters are to each other, they are as different as night and day.

Each sister wants what the other sister has. Carla is the creative one who easily switches from the world of Reality to the world of Imagination, but since she is not comfortable with this power she fears and rejects it. Alice, however, is the rational one who is discontent with systematizing and repeatedly prompts Carla to take them away from their cold, troubled world.

In one scene, Carla transforms a stone into a bird that eventually

bites her hand. But, that very stone would not bite Alice, primarily because Alice does not have the imaginative power at this point of the play to believe it.

The magical power of the imagination is further revealed when Sylvia, a young girl who has decided to kill herself that day, enters the lives of the sisters.

The sisters' belief that Sylvia is the alien that they have been waiting for produces the comical arguments that continue to extract gut-wrenching laughter from the audience when Sylvia insists she is not.

The audience quickly sees that all three characters must accept Imagination in order to transcend their earthly problems. It inevitably falls to Sylvia to save herself and the sisters.

The Duck Sisters is a challenging play; the audience must come to accept its surreal quality. A bench overlooking the edge of the universe is a wonderful setting and the bizarre imagery and plot will either be rejected or embraced by most audience members.

The play itself asks the audience to accept its surrealistic and metaphysical aspects from the onset, to shut off the right side of their brains. It is a fully packed two hour performance that does not let the audience down for one second.

The Duck Sisters runs every Tuesday and Friday afternoon until August 31 at Theatre Plus Toronto.



Barbara Gordon (Alice) ponders the fate of waterfowl everywhere in *The Duck Sisters*.

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