



Arts & Entertainment

Through the Lens of War: Morality and Conflict in Time Stands Still

By: Devon Gohde

WESTFIELD- For decades, photojournalists have captured the raw and heartbreaking realities of war and genocide. Showing those who live outside of these areas the dark realities of the world around us. In Donald Margulies' *Time Stands Still*, the toll that taking these photos takes on the person be-

world very differently, having not witnessed the horrible realities they have. Their relationship begins to move quickly and in a very different way from James and Sarah's over the last eight years.

The play's content is challenging, as it raises the question of whether a photojournalist photographing people in horrific situations actually helps

their work. Mennella plays the role with nuance, conveying Richard's empathy while maintaining his professional detachment. You can see the wheels turning as he is frequently caught between Sarah and James's riffs, carefully navigating their tension while trying to guide and support them both.

Mandy represents the average person's view on this type of work, as she later in the play says that people like her are unsure what they can do when they see images like the ones Sarah takes, other than feel bad about seeing what a war zone looks like. Her naivety, stemming from her age, comes out from time to time, but the play doesn't shame or demean Mandy's view; it simply offers the outsider's perspective. Bradli is a joy to watch on stage; her expressive body language and nuanced facial expressions allow the audience to immediately understand what Mandy is thinking and feeling, even in moments when she says very little. Her performance not only provides moments of levity but also deepens the contrast between Mandy and the more hardened characters around her, making her presence onstage both engaging and essential to the play's emotional balance.

Time Stands Still doesn't shame photojournalists for their work, but it also doesn't condone it; it remains neutral, allowing the audience to watch the realities of this work unfold throughout the play. How it takes a toll on a person and where it affects them in their lives and outlooks on the world. Despite the play being written over 15 years ago, its topic remains tragically relevant today and is not to be missed.

Time Stands Still will have performances at Westfield Community Players on January 17, 23, and 24th at 8 pm, and on January 18 at 2 pm. For more information, visit www.wcptheatre.org or call (908) 232-1221.



Courtesy of Christen Holly Photography

hind the lens and the moral standing of this type of work are confronted.

Directed by Ed Faver in his debut at Westfield Community Players, *Time Stand Still* follows Sarah (Alicia Harabin) and her long-term boyfriend James (Kirk White) after she is severely injured in a roadside bomb while photographing a war in an unnamed country.

James is nervous about Sarah's well-being, while she is ready to recover and get back to work. Aside from Sarah's injuries causing tension, their relationship is also tested by frequent visits from their editor, Richard (Stephen Mennella), and his much younger girlfriend, Mandy (Stephanie Bradli), who views the

them. As Sarah slowly recovers throughout the play, James questions whether this is the life he truly wants to continue living, deepening the rift between them. Harabin and White work so well off each other. Whether they are making faces at each other off to the side while Mandy makes comments that seem childish to them in more comedic moments, or when they are confronting each other on their relationship and work in heated arguments that make the audience hold their breath in tension, questioning who is right or wrong in this situation.

Richard serves as a mediator between them, deeply invested in both Sarah and James and the integrity of