

Collaborative Artists Ensemble presents “Unraveled” in NoHo!

The veteran theatre company proudly offers the West Coast Premiere of Jennifer Blackmer’s drama exploring the relationship between a mother and daughter when the end is imminent.

LOS ANGELES – When the producers of Collaborative Artists Ensemble were searching for their next play, they were looking for something that explored different aspects of mother/daughter relationships, and they found one that added the element of dementia to the complexities of the dynamic. But the deciding factor, said Managing Director Steve Jarrard, was the beauty of the writing in a script they couldn’t put down.

As such, **Collaborative Artists Ensemble** is proud to present the West Coast Premiere of ***Unraveled*** by acclaimed playwright **Jennifer Blackmer**, playing **Nov. 15-Dec. 8** at **The Sherry Theater** in North Hollywood.

In *Unraveled*, Joy is a professor of physics and philosophy, who has spent her life exploring theories of space and time. None of that has prepared her for the reality of watching cancer unravel her mother’s mind and body. As the hard work of care-taking begins to take its toll, she hires Anna, a hospice nurse, to help her mother. But when the rules of space and time no longer provide Joy the answers she needs, can Anna's simple lessons of how to care for another person help Joy knit the pieces of her life together again?

“*Unraveled* is the play that I was terrified to write, because it's based on real events,” Blackmer said. “Ten years ago I lost my mother to lung cancer, and her death was preceded by a ten-month struggle. It took me several years to come to terms with the fact that any chance I had to spend time with my mother (and my best friend) during the last ten months of her life was stolen from me. I was also forced to confront my worst self during that time which is, of course, something that nobody wants to do. Within the awfulness, however, was light. Over the journey of the play, Joy learns that the messiness of love and the unpredictable contradictions of being human are just as beautiful and necessary as the science of the stars. And perhaps they're actually the same thing.”

Blackmer serves as Professor of Theatre and Executive Director of the Virginia B. Ball Center for Creative Inquiry at Ball State University. Her plays have been produced off-Broadway and across the country to critical acclaim. She has won multiple awards, including being named the 2015 PEN/Laura Pels International Foundation for Theatre Award winner for Emerging American Playwright, and most recently, a finalist in the 18th Annual National Showcase for New Plays.

(more)

Beyond her pedigree, the producers were impressed with *how* Blackmer explores this relationship.

“We loved the way in which Jennifer tells this story, playing with time and memory in a fluid way,” said Jarrard, who is also directing. “Throughout the play, Joy is reconciling who her mother was with who she has become due to the sudden onset of chemotherapy induced dementia. We love that Jennifer shows this by using two different actresses at once to allow the audience to witness both who George is and who she was.”

Unraveled rounds out a successful 12th season for Collaborative Artists Ensemble. The company’s mission statement reads: Collaborative Artists Ensemble was founded in 2007 to create the opportunity for passionate theater artists to come together to create works that challenge and provoke both the artists as well as the audience. We strive to create an environment in which every actor can do his best work. We are fortunate enough to be able to produce only works that we are passionate about and aim for fearlessness in taking risks artistically. We are drawn to smaller shows with a strong female voice that are less based on spectacle and more focused on psychologically complex characters and themes that allow the audience to see things in a new light.

Jarrard has directed several of the company’s productions, including *The Food Chain*, *How I Learned to Drive*, *Eleemosynary*, *Lucia Mad*, *Through a Glass Darkly*, *A Strange Disappearance of Bees*, *Blood Relations*, *The Square Root of Wonderful*, *Lost Generation*, *The Lady From The Sea*, *City of Dreadful Night*, *Long Way Down* and *In The Balance*, among others. He is also an actor, prop man for TV and a poet. His cast includes both veterans of Collaborative Artists shows and some new faces, with Carolyn Crotty, Kathy Bell Denton, Jake Jensen, Drew Lee Davis-Wheeler, Heidi Shon and Meg Wallace performing.

Jarrard is excited to get this cast, the show, and its message, in front of an audience.

“We feel that the topic of mothers and daughters and their complicated relationships is one that everyone can relate to,” he said. “The difficulties of having to care for a loved one who is struggling with dementia and isn’t the same as she was will hit home for many people who have or will deal with similar circumstances. We feel that the play is a good reminder to take the time to really see and connect with their loved ones while they have time and remember that, as George says to Joy, ‘nothing lasts forever.’”

More information can be found at www.collaborativeartistsensemble.com.

Unraveled

Directed by Steve Jarrard
Written by Jennifer Blackmer
Produced by Collaborative Artists Ensemble

SYNOPSIS:

Collaborative Artists Ensemble is proud to present the West Coast Premiere of *Unraveled*. Joy is a professor of physics and philosophy, who has spent her life exploring theories of space and time. None of that has prepared her for the reality of watching cancer unravel her mother's mind and body. As the hard work of care-taking begins to take its toll, she hires Anna, a hospice nurse, to help her mother. But when the rules of space and time no longer provide Joy the answers she needs, can Anna's simple lessons of how to care for another person help Joy knit the pieces of her life together again?

DATE AND TIME:

Nov. 15-Dec. 8
Fridays and Saturdays at 8 p.m.
Sundays at 7 p.m.

LOCATION:

The Sherry Theater
11052 Magnolia Blvd.
North Hollywood, CA 91601

TICKET PRICES:

General Admission: \$20
**\$15 for students and seniors*

INFORMATION & RESERVATIONS:

For further information, please call: (323) 860-6569
For tickets – <https://unraveled.bpt.me>
For more information – www.collaborativeartistsensemble.com

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