

From bras to bridal gowns: Ephrons' comedy explores the culture of clothes



We women have all had our favorite outfits - and our least favorite outfits – at different stages of our lives. And sometimes even we don't know why we "loved" one article of clothing and "hated" another, or why we remember one piece above all others – we just do.

And so it is with the characters in the Beaufort Theatre production of "Love, Loss and What I Wore" at USCB Center for the Arts on March 8, 9 and 10. Written by sister playwrights Nora and Delia Ephron, the play is a scrapbook of vignettes about women, their relationships to their clothing, and the memories they trigger.

From the unfortunate prom dress and the perfect wedding dress to the tyranny of the purse and shopping for a bra, the stories are told in a series of comedic but sometimes touching monologues and short group pieces. Chances are good that women in the audience will recognize bits and pieces of their own lives in these stories.

Recognizing the distinctive talent of co-author Nora Ephron, is not difficult either. She wrote the

screenplay for the movie, "When Harry Met Sally," and wrote and directed "Sleepless in Seattle" and "Julie and Julia," among many others. She and Delia, co-authored the screenplay for "You've Got Mail," and several other classic romantic comedies, as well as this play.

Sadly, Nora died last year at the age of 70, of complications from leukemia. In 1996 when the Ephron sisters decided to write this popular stage play based on a book by the same name by Ilene Beckerman, they expanded on the original material by adding experiences gleaned from their own lives as well as those solicited from their friends.

"I Hate My Purse"

One of these additional pieces is the witty monologue written and originally performed by their friend, Rosie O'Donnell, "I Hate My Purse." As Nora, she declares that her observations are only for women "... who are bad at purses, who understand that their purses are reflections of negligent housekeeping, hopeless disorganization, a chronic inability to throw anything away, and an ongoing failure to handle the obligations of a demanding and difficult accessory --- the obligation, for example, that it should in some way match what you're wearing."

Nora is played by Lady's Island resident, Jennifer Joyce, who "--- can't imagine living anywhere else!" This is her third production with Beaufort Theatre and she most recently played the lead role of "Maggie" in last year's "Cat on a Hot Tin Roof." Of her character, Nora, she observes, "There are two types of women --- the ones who choose their purses for form and the ones who choose in favor of function. Nora goes for function in the extreme, and probably has not changed her purse for years. If your purse is a reflection of your life then you can only imagine what her apartment looks like!"

Gail Westerfield Directs Innovative, Full-scale Production



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