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All grown up

“Dog Sees God” revisits the “Peanuts” gang

BY VICTORIA DAVIS

OCTOBER 10, 2019

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ARTS EVENTS

Jon Etter

NOV 17, 2019

10:30 AM

MYSTERY TO ME

BOOKS KIDS & FAMILY

STEM Art & Film Festival

NOV 17, 2019

9:00 AM - 4:00 PM

MONONA TERRACE

ART EXHIBITS & EVENTS MOVIES



STOWE PHOTOGRAPHY

Charlie Brown is a jock, Sally is a Wiccan, Lucy is incarcerated, Pig-Pen is a perverted germaphobe, Linus is a pothead, and Marcy and Peppermint Patty are snobs focused on sex and sneaking drinks into the school cafeteria. Oh, and Snoopy is dead.

StageQ, Madison's queer-focused community theater company, doesn't hold back on the torments of high school in their latest dark comedy, *Dog Sees God*, where the members of the

Harmony Bar Art Show

NOV 17, 2019

11:00 AM - 5:00 PM

HARMONY BAR

ART EXHIBITS & EVENTS FUNDRAISERS

HOLIDAYS

Craig Blietz, S.V. Medaris

NOV 17, 2019

**OVERTURE CENTER-JAMES WATROUS GALLERY
OF THE WISCONSIN ACADEMY**

ART EXHIBITS & EVENTS

A Doll's House, Part 2

NOV 17, 2019

1:00 PM

AMERICAN PLAYERS THEATRE, SPRING GREEN

ISTHMUS PICKS THEATER & DANCE

Dark Arts & Crafts & Games

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1:00 PM - 6:00 PM

CRUCIBLE

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Peanuts gang have to navigate the trauma that comes with being hormonal teenagers. While there's plenty of drugs, drinking and hookups, the heart and soul of the play — directed by Jeremiah Gile and Zak Stowe — is young people trying to find love in an unforgiving environment.

Written by Bert V. Royal, *Dog Sees God* first premiered in 2004 at the New York International Fringe Festival and is playing through Oct. 19 at the Bartell Theatre. This award-winning production has a melancholy beginning, Snoopy's funeral, where Charlie Brown — now called CB — wondering about the afterlife and the purpose of living.

As CB (Joshua Biatch) grapples with some depressing philosophy, he makes amends with his childhood friend Beethoven (Tyler Stone), and the two quickly find themselves falling for one another. It doesn't take long before they have to endure grossly homophobic reactions from their peers.

Grace Ritcher gives a recognizable and captivating voice to Sally, a teenager who is quick to change religions but slow to pass judgement on others. Marcy (Alyssa Stowe) and Tricia (Katie Debs) rule the cafeteria and are still plotting diabolical schemes, but with a little more booze on the brain. Pig-Pen, now "Matt" (Rowan N. Meyer-Rainford), might try to keep clean hands, but his mind is even more disgusting than his cartoon counterpart. Linus, or "Van," has lost a few brain cells from smoking everything, including his blanket, but Lucy (Sara Wojtak) is still a self-proclaimed doctor, with an affinity for fire.

But amid the comedy is a very serious portrayal of stolen innocence, with the horrific underbelly of Beethoven's family life and brutal abuse at school. There are scenes and dialogue between Biatch, Stone and Meyer-Rainford that are hard to take, but they give a voice to people and situations that are all too real.

Dog Sees God illustrates a tale as timeless as the *Peanuts* comics themselves. While LGBTQA stories are becoming more visible in today's entertainment world, falling in love, growing up,

and wrestling with the meaning of living life are universal themes. It illustrates the pain many teenagers feel from keeping their true identities hidden.

Dog Sees God is a play that has grown up to meet the fans who grew up with the *Peanuts*' innocent escapades — and then went on to navigate high school without their guidance. As it turns out, even a wise Linus, a confident Lucy and a talented Beethoven didn't have the answers to how to survive high school. But in *Dog Sees God*, they're here to say that no one is alone, that everyone deserves a seat at the "cool table," and there's always someone — even just a pen pal — who wants to hear the words that are hardest to say.

THEATER & DANCE

STAGEQ



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COMMENTS

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Dog Sees God

StageQ checks in on what could have happened to the Peanuts gang as teenagers, 10/4-19, Bartell Theatre, at 7:30 pm Thursdays-Saturdays (2 pm on 10/19), plus 2 pm Sunday 10/13. \$20.

OCT 19, 2019, 2:00:00 PM

Communal captivity

Two Crows Theatre's "Someone Who'll Watch Over Me" is a deft exploration of boredom, dignity and companionship set in a Beirut prison. It's at The Jefferson in Spring Green through March 23.

MAR 22, 2019

Playhouse for the peculiar

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DEC 27, 2018

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