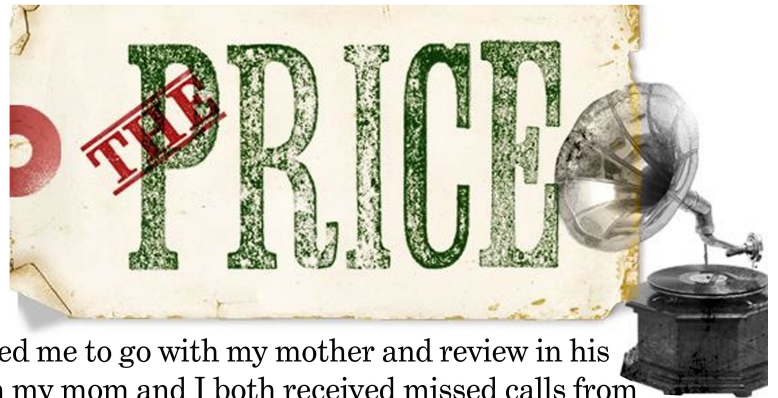


CHELSEA CUTLER

REVIEW FROM THE PEW



So, my dad happened to be under the weather and asked me to go with my mother and review in his stead. As Arthur Miller's "The Price" is about to begin my mom and I both received missed calls from an unrecognized number. My father had locked himself out in the rain with both dogs and calling from a neighbor's phone. I'm worrying at this point and the lights go down and we're sending texts just as the theatre cell phone message comes on the speakers. My mind is elsewhere and I start panicking about my father and the dogs and try to pay attention. Looking around at the audience I see many young faces. We've all read "Death of a Salesman" in school but obviously Miller's work withstands generations and sustains relevance and importance. I soon realize "The Price" is for young people trying to figure themselves out and can relate to those who've grown up with Miller and have already figured themselves out. The play starts and I'm hooked.

Just like Miller's other plays, "The Price" is political commentary about the "American Dream" and the price we put on ourselves, our lives, our possessions. This cast's delivery makes you laugh and drives you to be contemplative. (By now, I have forgotten about my father's plight.) "The Price" has only four characters and is about two brothers who come together after not speaking for years to settle their late father's estate. Alan Mendell plays Gregory Solomon, an elderly Jewish antique dealer who shows up to buy the furniture and steals the show with his one-liners and comical wave-like body language. Mr. Solomon turns out to be a mystical, wise, and business savvy man with a Yiddish accent who is the voice of reason, perhaps the voice of Miller.

The direction is on-point and the acting is superb and completely character appropriate. The play takes place at the estate with only furniture piled up behind the actors and a couple chairs and tables up front. It is simple and only displays the necessities of the set. The second half felt a bit long and continues to reveal deeper layers of the brothers' relationship. At the end, the cast receives a much-deserved standing ovation.

Go see "The Price" at the Mark Taper Forum running until March 22nd and keep up with the cool intellectual crowd. You'll get a kick out of an old Jewish man and learn a thing or two.

3 Bagels out of 4

