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Experimental and Savvy

Posted by [Patrick Hickey Jr.](#) on 6/02/11 • Categorized as [Arts and Dining](#)

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With its experimental theme, lack of real scenery and political undertones, it would be entirely too easy for the casual theatre-goer to walk out of "Bomb Shelter" after the first five minutes.

That's because it's nearly impossible to understand the two characters featured motivations. The lack of scenery and experimental dance incorporated as well only makes you more confused.

At first.

Those that can put these negative ailments to bed and simply wait for the story to unfold however will be rewarded with something completely original and equally bizarre.

The story of two lost lives, one, which is about to end, and one that has essentially ended before it was given a chance to begin. While "Bomb Shelter" [created by Kimberly Pau, Eric Mercado, Rachel R. Blackwell and DJ Karl Marx] is vanilla in approach, it's dynamic in message. A performance piece with just two characters, it has to work hard to keep your attention. After a bit of drag early on, it ends up picking up quite nicely though. While it may seem no-frills at first, these two characters represent two completely different generations and frames of mind.

As the plot unfolds, they both show their darker sides and flaws. As it eventually turns out, they have more in common than you could have ever thought.

Nevertheless, in spite of their bonding, they are unable to shake loose of their fatal flaws. For Grandpa [played by Jay Painter], his inability to cope with the past has ruined his life. Young Wallace [Josh Lauria], however, is petrified of the future and how his family, society and god will judge him.

Despite the grit and raw portrayal of these characters, you learn a lot about them and what they represent in a very short time.

Unable to rid themselves of these demons, they are perhaps worse for wear in the end. But given the opportunity to finally free them proves to be too tempting an offer to refuse.

Dark and experimental, "Bomb Shelter" isn't for everyone. The performances by are different, but through it all, they both prove themselves worthy of the stage.

Because of that, the play is a success.

In the end, this production is much like the phony crystal meth the two cook during the course of their bonding: dangerously volatile, but capable of providing a once in a lifetime experience.

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