

Lemon Bay Playhouse audience will 'Exit Laughing'

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ENGLEWOOD — The roar of laughter from Lemon Bay Playhouse was probably audible to anyone walking by Monday night.

The first dress rehearsal of the new show of the 30th season, "Exit Laughing," premiered to playhouse volunteers, and was received with roars of laughter and cheers.

"Exit Laughing" tells the story of three Southern women — Connie, played by Maureen Young; Leona, played by Susie Lowe; and Millie, played by Ruth

Shaulis — who are dealing with the death of their friend Mary.

Along for the ride are Connie's twentysomething daughter Rachel, played by Dawn Kalish, and her classmate Bobby, played by Ray Magsby.

Told in two acts, the story follows the women and their hilarious antics after the night of Mary's funeral, and dealing with the loss of their best friend.

Director Peter Ivanov is proud of his cast and the work they've put in leading up to this evening's premiere.

"The audience will find it

is easy to relate to, and has a lot of depth and surprise," said Ivanov.

This is his second time directing the show and he is happy to explore different aspects with different cast members.

Ivanov was not wrong. The show is full of laughs through much of the first act, and the women are hilarious with their clashing personalities.

Young, who plays Connie, is the level-headed one, and has a genuine motherly demeanor about her.

This plays well off her daughter Rachel, played by

Kalish, who, despite being a newcomer to Lemon Bay Playhouse stage, steals the scenes she is in.

Kalish brings a familiar quality of being a woman who's in college, dealing with her mother and her lack there of a love life.

The two women have a strained yet loving relationship many mothers and their daughters will recall.

Leona, played by Lowe, is the typical Southern hairdresser who gossips, knows everyone in town, but is still caring and kind despite a tough exterior.

Lowe commands the stage with her complaints

and sassy comebacks toward the clueless Millie.

Millie, who is played by Shaulis, is quirky and provides a great source of comic relief with her one-liners and silly facial expressions during the more serious parts of the show.

Magsby, also new to the Lemon Bay stage, is endearing in his role as Bobby and provides a bridge to Mary, who is never seen outside of her urn.

The show moves quickly and is very reminiscent of television situational comedies with characters who find themselves in outlandish situations,

with a deeper underlying message.

"Exit Laughing" also provides a great surprise late in the first act, and Magsby steals the show with his performance.

Mary is brought to life by the cast, through stories and the urn, which becomes a character in its own way.

Under the direction of Ivanov, the cast puts on a great opening to the 30th season. "Exit Laughing" is light, but still has a good serious underlying plot.

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