

Cloud 9 Review - Upside-Down and Topsy-Turvy

By Elaine L. Mura

1

[Email this Article](#) · [Printer Friendly Page](#)

A play to turn you on your ear, the unexpected becomes normal and the normal is unexpected. Playwright Caryl Churchill never gives the audience a chance - even for a second – to allow the mind to wander. Black is played by white; male is played by female; child is played by adult. The permutations are endless. And just when the audience begins to catch on, things switch. It's hard to believe that a writer so contemporary was first performed on stage more than 35 years ago – and she's currently 70 years old to boot. With Caryl Churchill, freshness and creativity tickle our fancies and make us re-evaluate old stereotypes and long-held beliefs. For a play written in the 1970's, CLOUD 9 couldn't be timelier.



Adam J. Smith as Clive and J.D. Cullum as Betty - Photo by Karianne Flaathen

CLOUD 9 opens in 19th century colonial Africa at a time when people knew what to expect from men and women, especially men and women from the glorious British empire - or did they? On the surface, all is as it should be. But quickly, the family becomes a convoluted mess. Commanding and protective husband Clive can't get enough of the local sexy widow Ellen. Perfect docile wife Betty has a thing for family friend/macho explorer Harry and wants to run away with him. Edward/Junior isn't quite as rough-and-tumble as papa wants. The family nanny Ellen can barely suppress her attraction to Betty. Mother-in-law Maud adds her special brand of acerbic comments. The native servant and chief bottle-washer Joshua quietly plants rumors where they will do the most harm. And on it goes. The perfect family unit. But all the action remains underground. Need I add that the humor is biting and hysterical at the same time.

Splash Magazines –...
3,897 likes

Like Page Share

2 friends like this





Gigi Bermingham as Edward, John Allee as Joshua, and Adam J. Smith as Clive - Photo by Karianne Flaathen

Act II takes the action to London 100 years later - but only 25 years later in character time. What happens when this motley crew returns to jolly old England and resurrects in 1979? The actors are the same - but the roles are completely changed. Now the child Victoria - literally a doll in 1879 - has become a wife and mother struggling with marital problems and issues of sexual identity during the sexual revolution. Her little brother Edward is now openly gay. In fact, everything that was hidden in Act I is reinterpreted through modern eyes as the same characters – but different too – make another appearance.



Laura Wernette as Mrs. Saunders and Adam J. Smith as Clive - Photo by Karianne Flaathen

As with all Antaeus productions, every role is double cast; and some of the cast members play multiple roles. On the day of the current review, the Hotheads were performing. On other days, the Blighters and/or a mixed cast (the Spacemen) perform. Adam J. Smith (Clive/Cathy/Soldier), Betty/Edward (J.D. Cullum), Edward/Betty (Gigi Bermingham) and the entire Hothead cast perform to perfection. Talented director

calendar

Thursday March 17th

11:00 AM | PLAZA WEST COVINA WELCOMES THE EASTER BUNNY

12:00 PM | THE EASTER BUNNY HOPS OVER TO THE SHOPS AT DOS LAGOS TO CELEBRATE SPRING

5:30 PM | THE SHOPS AT DOS LAGOS BRINGS "DOS LAGOS IN MOTION" FITNESS WALK TO THE COMMUNITY EVERY THURSDAY

9:00 PM | Room Service Thursdays

9:00 PM | TINKLE TWINS with DANA GOULD & ARDEN MYRIN!

Friday March 18th

11:00 AM | PLAZA WEST COVINA WELCOMES THE EASTER BUNNY

12:00 PM | THE EASTER BUNNY HOPS OVER TO THE SHOPS AT DOS LAGOS TO CELEBRATE SPRING

7:00 PM | Dates East 2016 - Difficult People

Feature Article

Tempflow™ and Tempur-Pedic® Reviews - What 35 Hours of Research Uncovered

Casey Stangl has done a brilliant job of making this complex and challenging play flow with ease. The entire production staff has done a simple but effective job of backing up the action but not becoming intrusive in this complex show. By the way, at several points, the cast breaks into song and dance - definitely never a dull moment. This exciting production is a must-see.



Adam J. Smith as Cathy and Gigi Bermingham as Betty - Photo by Karianne Flaathen

CLOUD 9 runs through April 24, 2016 with performances at 8 p.m. Thursdays through Saturdays. There are also 2 p.m. performances on Saturdays and Sundays. The Antaeus Theatre Company is located at 5112 Lankershim Blvd, North Hollywood, CA 91601. Tickets range from \$30 (weekdays) to \$34 (weekends). For reservations, call 818-506-1983 or go online at www.Antaeus.org.

1

- Film & TV
- Art & Books
- Music
- Celebrity Talk
- Celebrity Gift Suites
- Fresh Faces
- Talent
- Romance
- Local Entertainment
- Local Events
- Local Performances
- Local Charities
- Entertainment Gift Guides
- Goodies

[Top of Page](#)

0 Comments

Sort by



Add a comment...

 Facebook Comments Plugin