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THE CURSE OF OEDIPUS

Antaeus Theater

Reviewed by Carol
Kaufman Segal

L to R: Drew Coyle, Kitty Swink, Phillip Proctor, Belen Greene, Elizabeth Swain, Harry Fowler, Cameron J. Oro, Sylvie Mae Baldwin.
Background: Geno Monteiro, Rhonda Aldrich

Based on Oedipus the King by Sophocles, The Curse of Eodipus, is written by Kenneth Cavander, easily understood, and cut to two-and one-half hours. Produced by The Antaeus Company, and directed by Casey Stangl, the production is double-cast whereby two actors share every role. My review is based on the one cast that I saw and who were extremely impressive in their performances.

The God Apollo (Mark Bramhall) and his half-brother Dionysus (John Apicella) are once again trying to outdo each other in prophesying and foreseeing the actions of humans. Meanwhile, it is the time of year when the head of Thebes must pick four children to be sacrificed to the Sphinx. This is a curse that was put upon the population many years ago. The people were given a question and in order to eradicate the curse for eternity, they must be able to answer it.

In the absence of King Laius, his brother-in-law Creon (Josh Clark) must draw the names of the victims. Before the sacrifices are to be carried out, Oedipus (Ramon de Ocampo) arrives in Thebes and answers the riddle. When it is learned that Laius has been killed, Creon offers the crown and the hand of the widow Queen Jocasta (Rhonda Aldrich) to Oedipus for saving the country of its curse.

It had been prophesied that Oedipus would kill his father and bed his mother, thus giving him reason to abandon his

homeland in order to keep the prophesy from coming true. After he becomes King of Thebes, good times that began to dwell in that country begin to change and again there is a curse over Thebes. When Oedipus discovers that when he ran from his homeland, the man he killed in self-defense was indeed his father King Laius, and the woman he married, Queen Jocasta, was indeed his mother. Jocasta kills herself, and when Oedipus discovers her body, he blinds himself by piercing his eyes with the two brooches she is wearing. With this terrible curse upon Thebes, he is banned from the country.



Josh Clark, Rhonda Aldrich, Ramon de Ocampo -
Background: Mark Bramhall-John Apicella

Creon once again takes power, but unfortunately for the populace, he is more interested in his power than the good of his country. He eventually gives the crown to Oedipus's two sons, Polyneices (Brian Tichnell) and Eteocles (Douglas Dickerman), who are to share the honor alternately each year. However, Polyneices becomes power-hungry; the curse continues as the two brothers fight to the death, Oedipus returns and expires, and hopefully, the curse dies with the family.

The performances by the entire cast are outstanding, including all members of the chorus. Adam Meyer's performance on drums and other percussions adds a certain mystic to the happenings throughout the play.

The Curse of Oedipus plays Thursdays through Saturdays at 8 PM, Saturday and Sunday matinees at 2 PM, continuing through August 10, 2014 at the Antaeus Theater, 5223 Lankershim Blvd., in North Hollywood. Tickets are available at www.Antaeus.org, or by phone at (818) 506-1983.

Recommended.

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