

Writtle Cards - Seeds of Doubt

SEEDS OF DOUBT – WRITTLE CARDS, September 20, 2008

Director – Jeremy Pruce

Reviewer – Christine Davidson

‘Seeds of Doubt’ is a comedy set in Alan’s garden, where he is attending his vegetable plot and trying to find out whether his wife Claire is having an affair. Next door, Dave & Jill are also having problems, as Dave is a total ‘on the dole’ slob who expects his wife to do everything for him. Sarah whose husband has just left her and Derek, an accident prone nerd who lacks any confidence are their friends. Alan fears the onset of his fortieth birthday and a surprise party only serves to throw all the relationships into turmoil.

Kevin Stemp as Alan gave good characterisation as the boring husband. His confidence on stage made us believe that he really was a nice person but tedious. His projection and stage presence were excellent and for me one of the best performances on the night. Rick McGeouch as Dave was also another well executed character and made me feel that I wanted to hit him every time he put Jill down. Neil Smith made his interesting debut as Derek.

Both Claire (Michele Moody), who played the part of the bored wife and Sarah Wilson, portraying the deserted wife Sarah, who is preyed on by Dave, were good but for me the best performance of the female roles was Jill played by Elaine Reynolds whose sparky, animated performance made me want to cheer her when she finally made the decision to leave Dave.

Lighting and sound provided good support to the production although I would have liked to have seen the room lit and some lighting behind the shed.

The unfortunate circumstances of the stage curtains that refused to open at each scene did not help the play. The pace was a little slow, which an occasional empty stage didn’t help, this was disappointing for the last night. More characterisation work could have been done on several of the roles as sometimes I felt that they were repeating the words rather than believing them. Blocking difficulties could have been overcome if the shed was smaller and the thrust was used to greater advantage. The crew photographer taking photographs during the performance was irritating. Surely this could have been done at dress rehearsal!!