

FESTIVAL ANTIGONISH

'...a little something for everyone.'

Stones a side-splitting comedy

By Corey Leblanc • The Casket • August 3, 2005

Stones in His Pockets, a **side-splitting comedy** by Marie Jones brings the bright lights of Hollywood to small town Ireland. That combination creates **a whole lot of laughs**.

Starring FAST fan-favourite Jeremy Webb (Charlie Conlon) and newcomer to Antigonish – Andrew Musselman (Jake Quinn) – *Stones* is a **sharp-edged satire** that takes a shot at the stereotypical Hollywood scene and all of the pretension that goes along with it.

First and foremost, Jones' **witty and sometimes touching** dialogue is tremendous grist for the mill that is the **immense talents of both actors** that take centre stage.

Amazingly, the duo plays 13 very unique characters in this fast paced piece, including Charlie and Jake. From Musselman's *Mickey*, an old crotchety local who only has had more drinks than shots at stardom as a film extra, to Webb playing the convincing role of Caroline Giovanni – the American starlet, their **performances are second-to-none**. While Webb plays the lady, his scenes with Musselman are **hilarious**.

For an audience, keeping track of all of these characters could become a chore, but with the **flawless** transitions by both men, along with the **impeccable direction** of FAST artistic producer Ed Thomason, *Stones* swims, and not sinks, with the audience.

With a simple set, essentially a couple of benches, the precision of its direction, abilities of its actors, and, of course, the dialogue, become even more crucial. *Stones* **hits a home-run on all counts** with audiences visiting the Bauer Theatre.

As the play progresses, we get more into the story of the death of a young town's boy and his struggles, which end with him walking into the ocean with "stones in his pockets." His struggle reflects those of many of the young people in the quaint Irish village and their quest to breakaway and find what they think is a "bigger and better life" somewhere else. During all of this, both main characters also deal with their own demons – Charlie with his quest for filmmaking stardom in the shadow of past failings, along with Jake's reflections on his time in America and how it has changed him.

Although the back-end of the production takes a more serious tone, losing some of the early wit and humour, *Stones* is characterized from **wire-to-wire with fine acting and direction** – both showing **tremendous range** - that leaves audiences wanting more. And, of course, we are still left with some laughs as the acting duo "try" traditional dancing during one scene in their roles as extras.

Stones in His Pockets, which is often times a rarity, provides everything from drama to comedy, and just **a little something for everyone**.

867 • 3333

1 • 800 • 563 • PLAY

WWW • FESTIVALANTIGONISH • COM



Photo: Len Sheperd