

# Potomac Stages

## ***Solid performances in a touching two-character show***

Reviewed April 28

Running Time 2:00 - one intermission

General admission seating

Performances at Arlington's [Clark Street Playhouse](#)

The first thing to capture your imagination in this lovely production is the simple but impressive set by Ryann D. Lee. She's created a battered gazebo of a patio as an out of the way location for two troubled people. The hold on your imagination continues with the performances featuring a notable absence of artifice by two fine performers. Their interaction spins a magical feeling as their two characters slowly build a bond that may or may not survive beyond the events detailed in the play, but which, at least for the time being, is lovely to behold.

**Storyline: Two patients in an alcohol rehabilitation facility strike up first an acquaintance, then a friendship and finally a richer, fuller relationship. In the process they reveal more and more about themselves to each other as the bonds of trust overcome the barriers of caution.**

The two performers are Cecil Baldwin as the New York Artist just arriving at the Rehab center, tanked on the many tiny bottles provided on the flight to Colorado, and facing a massive cold turkey detoxification, and the theater's founding Artistic Director Deborah Kirby, as a Midwestern divorced mom who's already dried out but faces major stresses over a custody battle with her former husband over the child she wasn't able to protect when she was drinking. Both reveal character features slowly as they share their stories, hopes, fears and plans.

Director Jeffrey Keenan keeps this conversational piece from seeming too static by moving his cast of two around the spacious playing space throughout the first act. The movement seems completely natural, especially as Baldwin's character has to keep on the move until he feels more at home after spending more time at the center. Early in the second act a series of short vignettes as the two characters trade memories and moments is particularly notable before the piece moves on to its finale.

Lee's set isn't the only design element contributing to the feeling of the show. Bryan Miller enhances the spirit of the evening with both a lighting design that gives a sense of pace to the progression of scenes by giving each an appearance appropriate to the indicated time of day or night, and the sound of the chimes that govern the lives of the patients in the institution.

*Written by Vincent J. Cardinal. Directed by Jeff Keenan. Design: Ryann D. Lee (set) Melanie Dale (costumes) Tiffany Fillmore (properties) Bryan Miller (lights and sound) Mara Kaiser Maudlin (stage manager). Cast: Cecil Baldwin, Deborah Kirby.*