

Love story leaves audience with plenty to reflect on

**By Joe Couture, Regina Leader-Post
March 22, 2014**

Currently on the main stage at Regina's Globe Theatre, Salt-Water Moon is an engrossing and entertaining love story featuring talented performers in a beautiful and creative production.

Written two decades ago by well-known Canadian playwright David French, Salt-Water Moon is one of five semi-autobiographical plays about the Mercer family of Newfoundland. The 90-minute show is essentially a conversation between two characters. Jacob Mercer, played by Josh Ramsden, and Mary Snow, played by Lauren Holfeuer.

It's Newfoundland in the 1920s, and Mary is one month away from getting married. She's surprised one evening to find Jacob at her gate. While they were romantically involved the summer before, she hasn't seen him since he left a year ago without even saying goodbye.

The audience learns about their lives and stories as the characters speak to each other, with lots of humorous dialogue along with plenty of serious material. The chemistry between Holfeuer and Ramsden is excellent and they do a great job of portraying the complex characters. Their performances are especially commendable, given the challenges of 1920s Newfoundland dialect and sheer volume of dialogue.

Holfeuer has been in Globe productions before, in both Sleeping Beauty and Pride and Prejudice. Ramsden is making his debut at the Globe in Salt-Water Moon and will attend the Globe Theatre Conservatory this summer, a program that Holfeuer graduated from in 2012. Both actors are from Saskatoon and University of Saskatchewan bachelor of fine arts graduates.

Also making a debut at the Globe with Salt-Water Moon. although she is no stranger to the Globe's stages. is Regina's Judy Wensel. It's the first mainstage show directed by Wensel, who has been a part of the Globe in many capacities over the years, since she was a teenager.

Wensel leads an artistic team that is critical in creating the world of Salt-Water Moon, with a truly beautiful set developed with much resourcefulness. As with many plays the Globe stages, Salt-Water Moon wasn't originally written for the in-the-round format, resulting in some creativity required to bring the location. a porch and a front yard, basically. to life in a way all sides of the audience can appreciate.

The set. including a beautiful carpet depicting the walkway and plants of the yard, handmade, as explained by Globe artistic director Ruth Smillie in her remarks to the audience before the show. and the lighting and the sound convey the feeling of an evening of nice weather under the starry skies in a small Newfoundland community.

For Salt-Water Moon, Andrew Cull is the set and costume designer and Charity Gadica is the assistant set and costume designer. Leigh Ann Vardy is lighting designer. Rebecca Miller is stage manager and Angie Wangler is rehearsal apprentice stage manager.

It's excellently produced at the Globe. But beyond that, Salt-Water Moon, as a play, explores many interesting themes and will leave theatre-goers with much on which to reflect. The show is certainly worth checking out during its run at the Globe Theatre until April 6.