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SHOTGUN PLAYERS
PRESENTS

strangers, babies

Written by Linda McLean
Directed by Jon Tracy

Berkeley— May is a woman with a haunted past. Through interwoven encounters with her husband, her father, her brother, a one-night stand, and a stranger just doing his job, May's secret is slowly revealed. What evolves is an unforgettable tale of hope and redemption. Performances for *strangers, babies* begin **October 15** and run through **November 17** at **The Ashby Stage**.

Certain memories are impossible to erase. And there are some actions that you just can't live down. The sad part is, a handful of minutes can define an entire life, and the public knowledge of one event can make living almost impossible. The central character of Linda McLean's taut, circular drama is a woman who seems normal on the outside. Now. But her past is a barbed anchor filled with violence and a hunger for punishment that refuses to subside.

Across a uniquely structured series of five scenes, May traverses her past - at first with trepidation, eventually with incredible bravery. She is wrestling with fate to take control of her own story, and make it a happy thing. In the end, will society allow her to become a different person?

Scottish playwright Linda McLean took her own hair-raising ride in the writing of this play. She notes: "I was compelled to write this play before I knew what it contained. It began as a gentle interrogation... week after week it refused to stop there. I genuinely had no idea what the lead character had done until later, when it came in a torrent with multi-voices and huge emotional range, almost as if, even then, it was trying to disguise itself from me. At the end I was in pieces."

Luckily, McLean's dry wit and sense of humor infuses the story with a sense of noir mystery. While she never directly portrays the terrible crime from May's childhood, the clues are nerve-wracking, and her struggle to be absolved alternately begs for support and dismissal. Women being perpetrators of abuse is a rarely examined story, and McLean takes it on with a fine blade.

Strangers, babies features **Joe Estlack, Richard Louis James, Tim Kniffin*, Danielle Levin*, Tim Redmond & Cole Smith***. Set Design by **Nina Ball**, Costume Design by **Valera Coble**, Sound Design by **Teddy Hulsker**, Light Design by **Kurt Landisman** & Properties Design by **Jacquelyn Scott**.

* A member of Actor's Equity Association.

CALENDAR LISTING

WHAT: Certain memories are impossible to erase, and May is a woman with a haunted past. Through interwoven encounters with her husband, her father, her brother, a one-night stand, and a stranger just doing his job, May's secret is slowly revealed. What evolves is an unforgettable tale of hope and redemption.

WHEN: Previews for *strangers, Babies* are October 15-17th. Opens Friday, October 18th. Runs Wednesday and Thursday at 7PM, Friday and Saturday at 8PM, Sunday at 5PM through November 17th.

WHERE: The Ashby Stage, 1901 Ashby Avenue, Berkeley

TICKET PRICES: October 15 - 17 are Pay-What-You-Can. Regular performance nights \$20 - \$35. Advance reservations strongly advised.

For more information go to www.shotgunplayers.org or call 510.841.6500