

‘A Rock Sails By’ Is Out of This World

Simultaneously out of this world and profoundly grounded, Sean Grennan’s *A Rock Sails By* takes audiences on an existential expedition to explore the unknown, the unspoken, and the unidentified. Directed by Russell Wooley, *A Rock Sails By* follows dry witted Dr. Lynn Cummings (portrayed by Diana Wooley,) a renowned professor and astrophysicist who has the ability to recall everything she’s ever experienced. She’s just coming off the heels of being diagnosed with dementia when she learns she’s been grossly misquoted by journalist Jason Harper (portrayed by Brian Hamman,) regarding the nature of an as of yet unidentified object heading toward earth. Joined by her daughter, Olive (portrayed by Jamie-Lynn Riffenberg,) Dr. Cummings and Jason travel to an observatory in the New Mexico desert where they intend to uncover the truth behind the incoming celestial body for themselves. With Dan Ruben bringing impossible energy as The

Messenger. Other noteworthy performances being that of Leslie Werden, Wayne Blume, Liz Paz, and Natalie May.

The show's stark duality of the cosmic and the commonplace is also reflected in its set design, which on its surface appears simple, proves strikingly subversive and is complimented by gripping sound design which beckons an on-looking audience to lean in and ponder, "What next?"

The multifaceted motivations of the central characters strike brilliant juxtapositions of heart and mind. Jason's unassuming and inquisitive nature is exploited by his employers. Undertones of sensitivity bleed through Olive's aloof relationship with her mother. Dr. Cumming has built a life which revolves around the dissemination of cold hard truths. But will go to staggering lengths to avoid confronting the reality of her own personal circumstances.

Much like the moon animates the sea, Grennan's lines of dialogue swell, crest, and collapse into one another masterfully. Pulling in and guiding its audience with luminary understanding of the human condition.

A Rock Sails By incorporates refreshingly modern themes such as humanism, nihilism, and the enigmatic nature of time but what is perhaps most refreshing about this show is that it serves as an existential Rorschach test, only filling in the negative space and leaving it to you, and *only* you, to determine its meaning once you've seen it for yourself.