

Amigo's Blue Guitar

By Tom MacKan

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Heads up, Hamilton, Citadel Theatre is bringing you a trio of inaugurals this week in your Easter basket, and wants you to count them!

One, the inaugural appearance of a work by multiple award winning Canadian writer Joan MacLeod; two, Mixed Theatre's first production ever; three, Luis Arrojo's debut as a local director. So thank you Eostre, goddess of the dawn, for this seasonal gift.

The play is "Amigo's Blue Guitar" and it opens next Thursday, dear readers, at The Citadel on Rebecca Street, corner of Hughson. The company is Mixed Theatre, and they're expecting long line-ups. Get the details for tickets below.

The director, as noted, is a local familiar face with a growing theatre reputation, Luis Arrojo, and for his cast he's recruited a promising group. There's young Gavin Bailey, in his emerging role as an actor, and out of Ancaster, up-and-coming Laura Ellis. More seasoned performers round out the company in Sean Emberley, Carlos Jimenez-Rauda, and Lyla Miklos.

What's to know about Mixed Theatre? They're not shy in announcing themselves as dedicated to the production and the nurturing of theatre focusing on cultural diversity and multi-culturalism, and to creating opportunities for artists of diverse backgrounds to find a voice within the arts and cultural community of Hamilton. To this end Mixed Theatre brings to Hamilton for the first time acclaimed Canadian playwright, writer, and poet Joan MacLeod. Based in Victoria, BC, MacLeod boasts over two dozen awards and nominations from such prestigious judges of writing as the Carol Bolt Awards, Betty Mitchell Awards, Dora Mavor Moore Awards, Chalmers Awards, Prix Italia, and the Governor General's Award which she won in 1991 for Amigo's Blue Guitar.

Her plays found a home for a long time at Tarragon Theatre in Toronto, and have been produced abroad in Britain and in America to considerable acclaim. Of the play itself, it tells of a Canadian family that takes in a Salvadorian refugee into its home and of what transpires in the experience. Both a comedy and a drama, Arrojo suggests it's a "dramedy", a nuanced story transcending messages of hope and despair, foreignness and estrangement. He avoids the terms warm and inspiring, but a noticeable evocation of the spirit of the refugee will inspire each of us to face our demons and in that exercise, escape them.

All together the Citadel Theatre brings to its 300 seat Main Theatre a highly promising theatre experience that deserves our attention and attendance. Of earlier productions, The Globe and Mail says "(MacLeod) shares with novelist Ian McEwen the ability to stretch tension over everyday domestic scenes..", and The New York Times observes, "(she) has written deeply complex characters who pulse with life and humour."

Tickets prices are \$10 for the April 4 Thursday 8pm preview and \$20 for the rest of the run, 8pm Friday 5th and Saturday 6th, and 2pm Sunday 7th. The Citadel is at 28 Rebecca Street (corner Hughson). Phone 905 540 9862, or email mixedtheatre@gmail.com Tell them I sent you.

AMIGO'S BLUE GUITAR

April 4–7

Presented by Mixed Theatre

@ Citadel Hamilton.

28 Rebecca St., Hamilton.

citadelhamilton.ca

tix: 905.540.9862