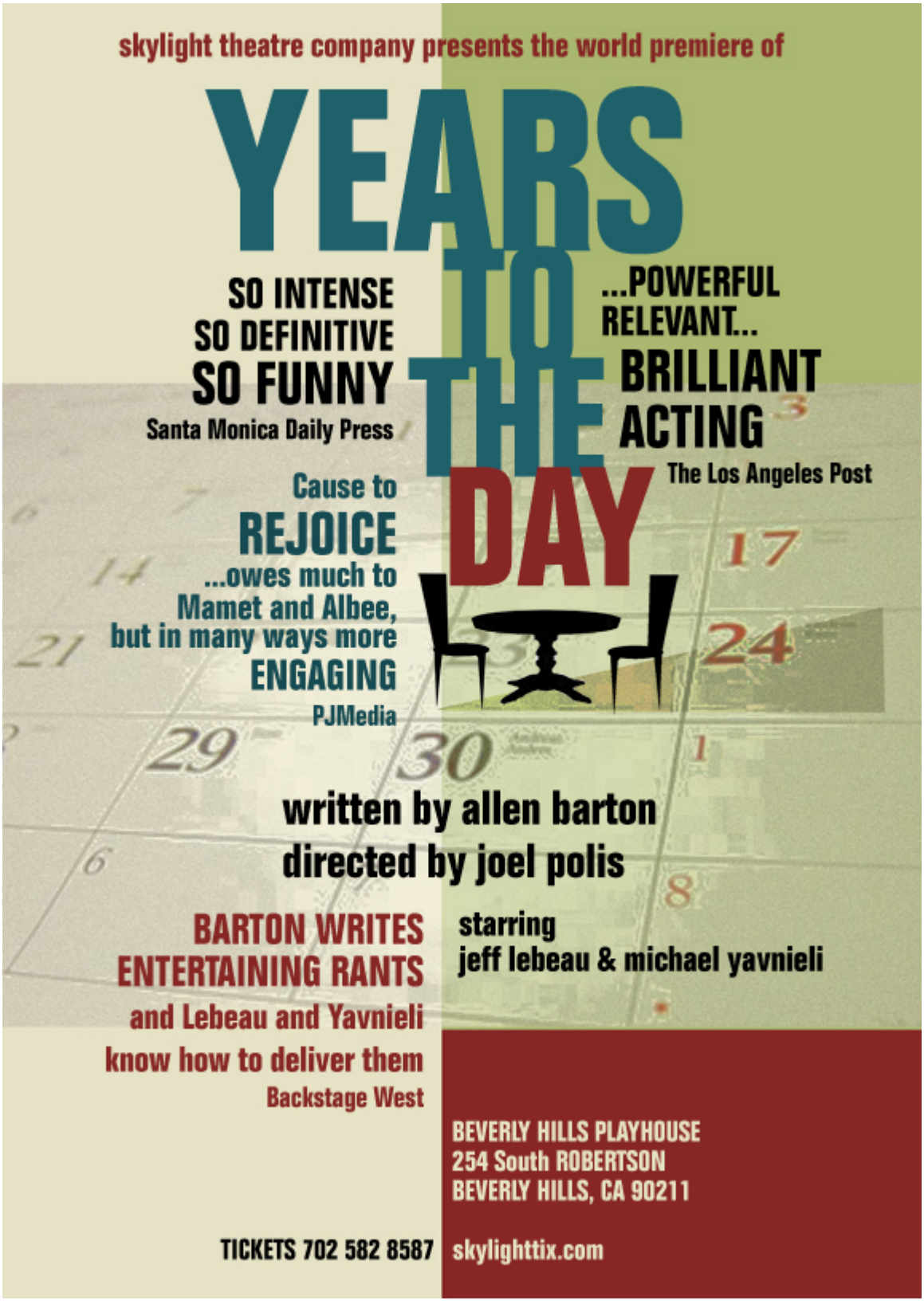


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Skylight Theatre Company presents the WORLD PREMIERE of

Years To The Day

A DARK COMEDY written by Allen Barton and directed by Joel Polis

Opening on April 6, 2013 reception to follow

8pm Fridays and Saturdays, 7pm Sundays

at the Beverly Hills Playhouse 254 South Robertson Blvd., Beverly Hills

Los Angeles, CA – These days, we hang on to people and friendships through the impressions we get from their online profiles. Yet, over the years, people seldom share any deep and personal changes through social media. Allen Barton explores the collision of these relationships in his WORLD PREMIERE dark comedy YEARS TO THE DAY at the Beverly Hills Playhouse.

Two 40-something men, who have been friends for decades but only cursorily in touch via social media over the past four years, finally get together for coffee. However, their long anticipated "face to face" meeting reaps surprising consequences now that truthful and dramatic changes in each of their lives are revealed. Can this long time relationship survive?

"After meeting an old friend, four years to the day from our last get together, it struck me that though we knew what phones and computers we were using, we had no clue about each others lives, or what had truly happened to us in those years." – Allen Barton (Playwright)

ALLEN BARTON (Playwright) is a Los Angeles-based writer-director, and classical pianist. He has written & directed five short films. Allen's first feature screenplay; REAL MUSIC was a top-three finalist in the CAPE New Writers Award Competition. He is author of several one-act plays and has earned numerous stage, TV, and film credits as an actor. Allen performed Gershwin's "Rhapsody in Blue" at the 25th Annual S.T.A.G.E. fundraiser (Wilshire Theatre), was a prizewinner in the 2002 Los Angeles Liszt Society Competition, and has recorded five CD's (available on iTunes). In 2010 he was made a Steinway Artist. A graduate of Harvard University, his selected directing credits include ENGAGEMENT (writer), THE INTERVIEW, THE REAL THING, RABBIT HOLE, the world premieres of ABOUT FAITH, PINK DOT, Suzanne Whang's hit one-person show, I MAKE YOU LAUGHING, and Guerrilla Rep's inaugural production of BURN THIS.

YEARS TO THE DAY opens Saturday, April 6, 2013 at 8pm at the Beverly Hills Playhouse 254 South Robertson Blvd. Beverly Hills, CA. Performances are **Friday, Saturday 8pm and Sunday 7pm through** June 2, 2013. Tickets are $25- $30. For reservations call **702 KTC-TKTS (702-582-8587)** or online at **www.ktctickets.com**

JOEL POLIS (Director) most recently directed Lynn Manning's SYMPATHY FOR THE DEVIL as part of KTC's LAbWorks 2012 at the Skylight Theatre Complex. Last season Joel directed the world premiere of Kathy Graf's highly acclaimed award winning drama HERMETICALLY SEALED (starring Gigi Bermingham) at the Skylight. Selected directing credits include Jerry Lambert's STRAIGHT TIME at the Odyssey and Joe Bay's LAST FLING at the Hayworth. An actor-turned director, Joel has over 100 TV and movie credits as well as scores of plays on his resume, most recently Kathy Graf's THE SNAKE CAN at the Odyssey Theatre. He is a graduate of Yale Drama School and USC's School of Theater.



THE SKYLIGHT THEATRE COMPANY (formerly Katselas Theatre Company) is a vibrant, expanding family of artists committed to developing and producing new works that resonate with Los Angeles' richly diverse population. STC's focus on supporting and developing local talent through its various INKubator development programs has found wide-ranging appeal. Offering Los Angeles playwrights a home to test and refine their work in front of an audience, the 2011 and 2012 INKubator programs reflected the work of more than 100 local writers and 30 musicians through 45 staged readings, 18 extended workshop productions, and eight musical events. The 2011 and 2012 production seasons featured the world premieres

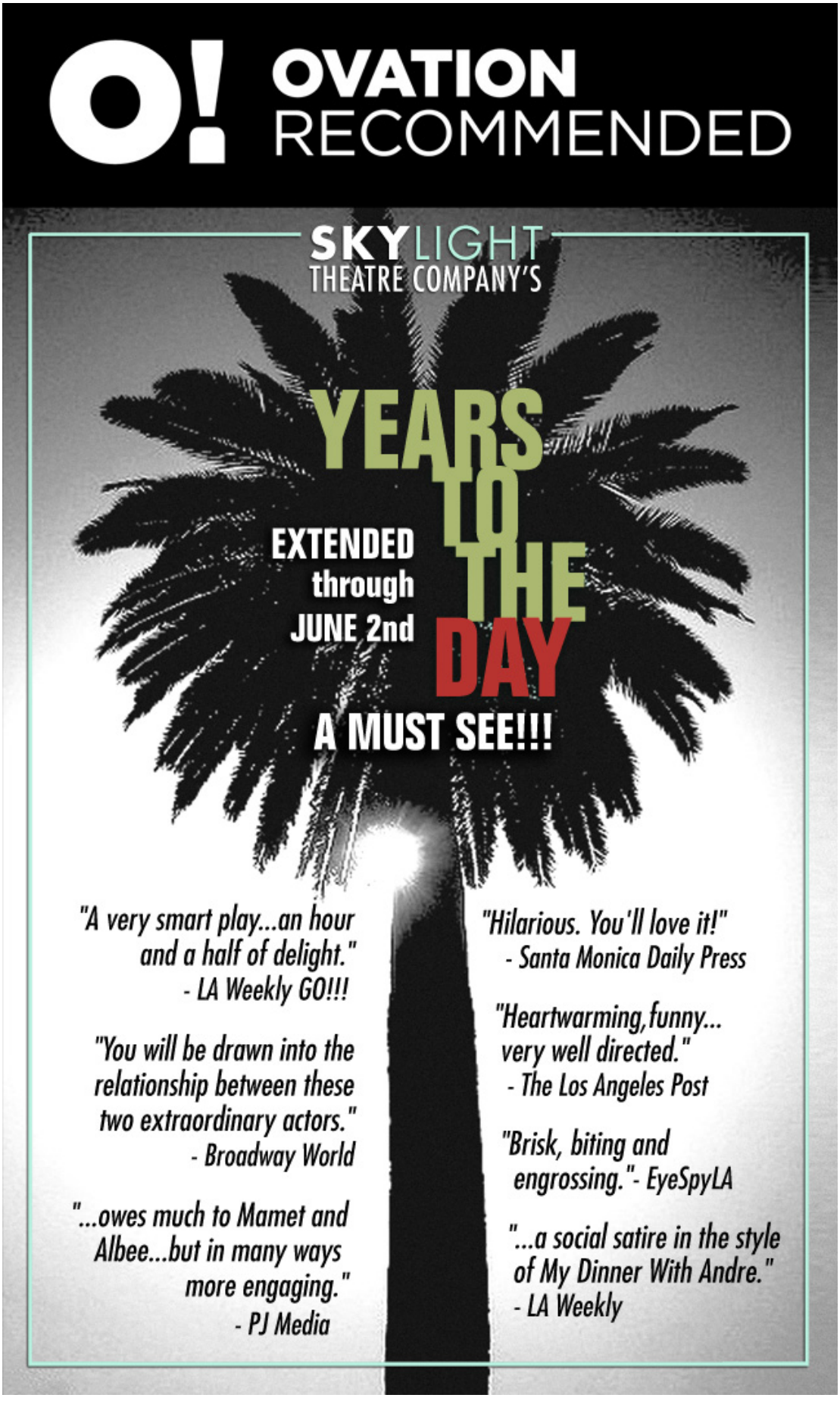
of nine INKubator projects, with four more world premieres scheduled for 2013. Nominations and awards have taken notice of STC's new focus on local writers. In 2010 STC produced **INFLUENCE** (2010 Los Angeles Drama Critic's Circle nomination for Best Actor and two LA Weekly nominations for Best Play and Best Production), **HERMETICALLY SEALED** (2011 Los Angeles Drama Critic's Circle nomination for Best Actress, an LA Weekly nomination for Best Ensemble and the LA Times List of top ten productions for 2011) and **MAD WOMAN** (2011 Los Angeles Drama Critic's Circle nomination and an LA Weekly Award Winner for Best Solo Performance) in addition to numerous Critic's Choice or Pick of the Week designations.

GARY GROSSMAN (Producer/Artistic Director) started his career in New York at the Public Theatre, Café La Mama, and Sheraton Square Playhouse. He has produced over 300 stage plays, including more than 50 world premieres. Among his celebrated productions are *Romeo and Juliet* directed by Milton Katselas (**3 LADCC Awards**), *Dylan* (**3 LADCC Awards**), *Dream Man, Lone Star, Balm In Gilead, Four, The Tenth Man, Visions and Lovers, Rabbit Hole, La Ronde De Lunch, Influence,* and *Mad Women*. In addition to his work for the Katselas Theatre Company, Gary has produced for the prestigious Matrix Theatre Company, where he was associated with the celebrated productions *The Homecoming, Endgame, and The Seagull*. For television he co-produced *Sadie and Son* (CBS) and the sitcom pilot *Man In The Kitchen* (ABC). He is the **Executive Producer for award-winning director Chuck Workman's documentary, *The Actor's Life***.

JEFF LeBEAU (Jeff) is an EMMY AWARD winner and has numerous stage credits Off Broadway; US (Lion Theatre, directed by Jennifer Gelfer), THE LAST PITCH (Noho Arts), and nationally; AGENCY (Coast Playhouse), HURLYBURLY (**Geffen Playhouse**, directed by David Rabe), TRANSLATIONS (Capital Rep, NY), HARRY BLACK (Ensemble Studio), THE CHAIN and HOT N' THROBBING (Circle Rep, directed by Anne Bogart), BURNING IN CHINA (directed by Caleb Deschanel, NY International Fringe Festival). He appeared in the West Coast premiere include SWIMMING and the LA Premiere of BIG DEATH AND LITTLE DEATH at the Road Theatre Company. Selected Film/TV: AMERICAN FROM THE SOUTH, SPIRIT—STALLION OF CIMARRON, THE BIG EASY, MOVING PIECES, BLACK LISTED (directed by Robert Townsend), THE PRACTICE, LIFE AS A HOUSE, and SUMMERLAND. Jeff has voiced work for Dreamworks Animation, Narration for A&E, and the Discovery Channel, a Short Video Special for which he received an **Emmy Award**.



MICHAEL YAVNIELI (Dan) has collaborated on three projects with **Emmy Award winner Gene Reynolds** (THE TENTH MAN, OF MICE AND MEN, and THE TIME OF YOUR LIFE, which also starred **Tony Award winner John Glover**). Michael was seen in the critically acclaimed Hermosa Beach Playhouse Production of TRACERS, and played various roles in BALM IN GILEAD, ROMEO AND JULIET, RICHARD III, AND ANNE OF A THOUSAND DAYS. Selected TV and film credits include working opposite **Meryl Streep, Steve Martin, Dustin Hoffman, Al Pacino, Toni Collette**, and **Kiefer Sutherland** among others.


OVATION RECOMMENDED
SKYLIGHT THEATRE COMPANY'S
YEARS TO THE DAY
EXTENDED through JUNE 2nd
A MUST SEE!!!
"A very smart play...an hour and a half of delight." - LA Weekly GO!!!
"You will be drawn into the relationship between these two extraordinary actors." - Broadway World
"...owes much to Mamet and Albee...but in many ways more engaging." - PJ Media
"Hilarious. You'll love it!" - Santa Monica Daily Press
"Heartwarming, funny... very well directed." - The Los Angeles Post
"Brisk, biting and engrossing."- EyeSpyLA
"...a social satire in the style of My Dinner With Andre." - LA Weekly

LA WEEKLY FREE

GO!

By Steven Leigh Morris

Thursday, April 25, 2013

THE RISE OF TWO CHARACTER PLAYS

Is it possible that two-person plays, economically expedient for their small casts, are on the rise in L.A.? That they pose a challenge to hegemony of the 99-cents-only theater genre, the solo performance — a genre so often abused by critics for its penchant to either impersonate a celebrity or to indulge, as its name suggests, in autobiographical wanking?

If a pair of really good two-person plays running concurrently on the Westside is any indication, a mere couple of characters can get to the heart of just about anything with all the wit and vivacity of, say, a three-or-more-character play that would pose an exponentially greater challenge to cost-conscious producers.

In actuality, as in so many one-person shows, each of these pas de deux has many more characters than actors. The surplus just happens to reside offstage, referred to by the two actors. They are spouses or exes or children of the principals, employed without pay to flesh out the portrait of life embodied by the duo.

Like *Annapurna*, Allen Barton's gorgeous new play, *Years to the Day*, is a reunion. It too concerns two friends, here in their early 40s (Michael Yavnieli and Jeff LeBeau), wrestling with each other over their histories. It too lasts 90 minutes without intermission. It too swims against an undercurrent of death. It too has beautifully tender performances. It too hangs dramaturgically on the question of who did what to whom and why.

In my opinion, it's a better play, for a number of reasons. There's no cutting off scenes for comic effect. It just has two guys get together for coffee. They haven't seen each other in person for four years. From that oh-so-simple premise it rolls along, without scene changes, without sound effects and with barely a set — a table and two chairs. Director Joel Polis has such confidence in the brains residing in Barton's play, in the vivacity and veracity of the conversation, that he leaves his duo sitting for most of it.

Thus unfolds a social satire in the style of *My Dinner With Andre* that's simply George Bernard Shaw for the 21st century.

The pair chide each other, they banter over hanging onto an Android phone with last year's tech in order to pounce next year on the newer model. They argue over a movie, one of them infuriating the other because he liked it, the other becoming lunatic-inflamed that each scene was merely a hallucination. And this series of hallucinations is actually the story of their lives and their marriages and children and their sojourns through life on the brink of death..

Their discussions of politics, of culture, of technology, abstracted by their setting in a netherworld maybe five years in the future, is a gentle parody of the way we discuss politics, or culture, or technology. They talk about "the event" — and argue over security measures that followed. One becomes so exasperated with the other that he breaks out in hives. The play is a slightly absurdist, slightly whimsical, deeply ironic and very funny commentary that deflates all we might take to be important, and self-important.

One reveals he's gay. It's not a melodramatic moment at all. The confession is an irritated response to the other character's spew opposing gay marriage. The offender confuses Stonehenge with Stonewall — or pretends to. The play is *The Odd Couple* with substantive repartee.

The only production flaw is that no couple would argue this loudly in a public place and not be asked to leave, or respond to the annoyance of passers-by. It could easily be set in a private place.

It's so good to see a play unafraid of articulating an argument, because plays now are supposed to be all about subtext. *Years to the Day* is about its text, about life crises and self-absorption and desperate, comic loneliness. It's a very smart play, an hour and a half of delight.

The Los Angeles Post

YEARS TO THE DAY
by Allen Barton

Review by Rose Desena

The last time I saw a play with two men on stage just talking it was in NYC and the play was Steady Rain. I was not only blown away by sheer strength, I was now convinced that simple rocks. "Years To The Day" is just that, two men on stage at a single table swigging from takeout coffee cups and talking. Their conversation like the one in Steady Rain was very powerful and lulled the audience into a trance-like state. Jeff (Jeff LeBeau) and Dan (Michael Yavnieli) command your attention and keep you captive with their well-trained voices.



Michael Yavnieli and Jeff Lebeau

Photo by Ed Krieger

The writer Allen Barton used a true personal experience to create this story of two old friends who get together after four years to catch up. Now in their mid-forties both men are living the adversities of getting older, dealing with family, health, personal growth and finally becoming their own person. A lot of the dialog was very relevant, good political references and situations any adult age group could easily relate

Heart warming, funny, very well directed with brilliant acting, this is good theater.



***Years to the Day* — A Play the Right Can Stomach**

April 15th, 2013

Libertarians and conservatives who complain they have little to see in the cinema and theatre that even remotely expresses their views – and when they do, it's almost always pretty amateurish stuff – have cause to rejoice in Allen Barton's *Years to the Day*, currently in a limited run at the Beverly Hills Playhouse.

But the play — a dialogue between two longtime friends, one liberal, one conservative/libertarian — is far more than a political tract. It is a meditation on midlife in most of its important aspects — relationships, family, sexuality, technology, politics, health, and (naturally) death.

The structure of the play — two friends, graduates of an "elite university," meeting for coffee for the first time in four years and then going after each other, often quite wittily, for eighty minutes, as one hidden secret after another pours out — owes much to David Mamet and Edward Albee. But — dare I say it — I found Barton's work in many ways more engaging than that of the more famous playwrights, perhaps because those revelations related more to my life. They had a decidedly contemporary edge.

I won't reveal what they were because they are the fun of the play — and you should see it while you can. Especially if you are a conservative or libertarian, this will be like finding an oasis in the Sahara of the American theatre. But bring your liberal friends too. They may see a very different play from you here — and it will be sure to generate a lot "interesting" conversation afterwards. (When is the last time that happened?)

I assure you the production is up to snuff, well-directed by Joe Polis with fine performances by Michael Yavnieli and Jeff LeBeau. Barton himself, as many of you know, hosted the "Front Page" show for PJTV. He is also a theatre director, acting teacher, and concert pianist. (I know — one of those accomplished people. What can we do?)

Tickets are available here. If you are anywhere near Southern California, go.

smdp.com
Santa Monica Daily Press

Coffee with Dan and Jeff

08 Apr

Have you ever been involved in a conversation that was so intense, so definitive, and so funny that you wish someone had been taking notes?

Fortunately, someone did when two forty-something men who had been friends since freshman year in college got together over coffee for the first time in four years. And the range of subjects that they got intense about was both noteworthy and hilarious.

Allen Barton has written a deceptively simple play: *Years To The Day*, now having its world premiere at the Beverly Hills Playhouse. The story is about friendship between two men: Dan (Michael Yavnieli), full of anger and angst, and Jeff (Jeff LeBeau), whose opinions are diametrically opposed to Dan's on just about everything. They have a most contentious friendship.

They start out arguing about the relative merits of their respective Awesome Phones and the usefulness of social media. Says Jeff, "Better four years of text and social media than four years of nothing." To which Dan replies, "Perhaps if people would insist on meeting in person, and not do all the online avatar bullshit, the in-person would happen more often."

Likening it to the question of the chicken and the egg, Jeff asks, "Which came first, loneliness or text?"

After further discussion, the men segue into a conversation about The Latest Film. Dan hated it; Jeff saw it twice. "Actress Du Jour was extraordinary in that film," he says. Then, after Dan condemns the film in the most vitriolic way, Jeff offers his critique: "I thought it was a work of art. I thought it was provocative, I thought it was original, I was drawn in, I cared. I cared what happened and the hallucinations were I thought integral to the story of the film. I thought the political commentary was spot-on. Acting top notch. The flow, the pacing. I thought she did a bang-up job of it. I think it deserves all the accolades it can get." You can't get a critique much better than that.

Eventually the men leave off arguing about trivia and get to the hard-core experiences of their lives. Dan is morose because at 43 he feels he is about to die. "I've turned the corner," he says. "I'm on the downhill slope."

He mourns that he's middle aged, but Jeff tells him that 50 is middle age. "And 50 is the new 40, so you're not middle-aged until 60."

A series of unexpected confidences and intimate secrets follow. Jeff talks about his marriage; Dan talks about his parents. Touching moments.

And then it's back to the arguments about politics, the elections, and the fact that Dan had voted for the woman whom Jeff calls "a ridiculous and insubstantial homophobic nincompoop."

"Yes," Dan replies, "but I don't need a brain in my President. All I needed from her was her big fat NO to more spending."

And so it goes. The men are deadly serious. They never smile, but their dialogue is laugh-out-loud funny and their timing is impeccable. Director Joel Polis has managed to keep things lively in a space that contains only a table and two chairs, two men, and a lot of talk.

You'll love it. I did.