

Two Old Black Guys: Raw, gritty, humorous and real

Written by Alaina Lewis



Penumbra does it again... but that's a statement that assumes that there was ever any doubt in the world premiere of their new play, *Two Old Black Guys Just Sitting Around Talking*.

If the title is a mouthful, it only places second to the incredible tug of war story, sewn together between two elder Black men whose lifelong hate for one another, provides an unbreakable bond of necessity and brotherly love.

The story, written by Virgin Islands native and retired University of Arizona professor Gus Edwards, isn't your typical tale spawn from a problem and met with a cliché resolve. Rather, it illustrates a truer depiction of life and the art of getting around its many challenges, by focusing more on a cloud's silver lining without pretending that in the end there will never be another storm.

There's a lot to learn from dropping eaves on a private conversation between two elders who deliver more bark than bite, during their daily war over a bench in the park outside their apartment complex. In this Odd Couple Parody, Abe, is an old school gent and a former prize boxer who's joined at the heart strings with Henry, a suave and artistically inclined fellow, due to a bond formed by their love for the same woman.

As the saying goes, there truly is a thin line between love and hate. And for two men who've spent the fortunes of their youth intertwined by a window seat into each other's lives, they learn that after the jobs, the women, and their agility are said and gone, their current needs are timely met and defined by a multitude of inner riches. Their relationship, although seemingly built on a sand trap and melded with a consistent antagonizing spirit, is more rhyme than riddle, and incased in a solid friendship.

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The play is raw, gritty, humorous and real. Under the direction of Lou Bellamy, this two-person story doesn't exist to resolve any lifelong issues between the pair, but rather it serves as a guidebook to any adversaries, by showing us that the best resolution is not that of always expecting a fairytale happy ending, but rather learning to co-exist in areas where agreeing becomes the hardest task.

Two Old Black Guys Just Sitting Around Talking, runs at Penumbra until May 23. And if my opinion counts for more than just ink trappings on a page, I encourage everyone to check out this wonderful tale, if not for a good laugh, than to witness the unmistakable magic and chemistry shared between the characters.

For more information, visit www.Penumbrateatre.org