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Classifieds

Contests

Time For A Game Of Godot Cop, Bad Cop

James Hamilton and Collin Doyle haul Beckett's title character in for questioning in *Alias Godot*

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ALIAS GODOT

Directed by Bradley Moss. Written by Brendan Gall. Starring Julien Arnold, Brian Dooley, Collin Doyle, James Hamilton, and Christopher Schulz. *The Roxy* (10708-124th St). Tickets available at the *Roxy* box office (453-2440).



Ian Jackson

After local actor James Hamilton read Samuel Beckett's play *Waiting for Godot* for the first time in college, he was left with more questions than answers.

See You Later, Interrogator | James Hamilton gives Julien Arnold the third degree in *Alias Godot*.

"I didn't get it," he laughs. "I had an absolute blast reading it, and I knew that Beckett was getting at something really substantial and important in the piece, but it was a little over my head at the time."

He wasn't alone in his limited understanding of the 1953 classic — fellow thespian Collin Doyle wasn't sure what the absurdist play was about either.

"I enjoyed it, though," he says. "It definitely makes you think, and that's what any good piece of theatre does. What I liked about it was that it was so open that in the end, you decide what it's about. For some, its ambiguity is its greatest weakness, but for me, that's the play's greatest strength."

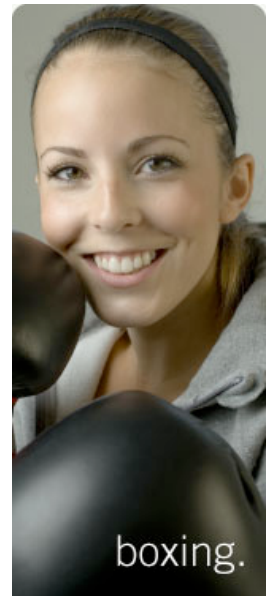
That ambiguity is what allowed Toronto playwright Brendan Gall to write a sequel of sorts to Beckett's play entitled *Alias Godot*, in which both Hamilton and Doyle are preparing to appear in as the production makes its local debut this week.

Waiting for Godot centres around two tramps, Vladimir and Estragon, as they wait expectantly (and unsuccessfully) for someone named Godot to arrive. *Alias Godot* attempts to tell the other side of the story, imagining why Godot was never able to make his rendezvous. In Gall's version, Godot was held up in an interrogation room by two corrupt cops from a New York-like city who think this odd foreigner might have something to do with their investigation into a recent crime. Hamilton and Doyle play Rocko and Linus, two agents from the Domestic Terrorism Unit, who evoke memories of Lucky and Pozzo from Beckett's play.

While Rocko, Linus and the other characters recall figures from *Waiting for Godot*, Hamilton stresses that this production's main goal is ensuring the people onstage are believable outside the context of Beckett's original.

"These characters are different enough in style and personality from the characters in Beckett's play that we don't have to worry too much about emulating some equivalent character from *Waiting for Godot*," Doyle explains. "That's what Gall did so well when he wrote this play; he wrote these characters in such a way that they could exist even if *Waiting for Godot* never did."

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waiting for Godot never aia.

“We talked about Waiting for Godot a little bit when we first all got together,” Hamilton says, “but we’re not really concerned with it too much. Alias Godot has to be able to live on its own for the people who don’t know the original Beckett play. If you have no idea what a Godot even is, it’s still a very good play. For those who know and love Beckett’s play, I think that Alias only enhances the original.”

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