

“White” is fun to watch!

By Kevin Marshall

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The Hippodrome’s current production of the James Ijames play “White” is fun to watch as four characters navigate issues of art, equity, diversity, inclusion, LGBTQ+ as well as individual identity and cultural appropriation issues. These issues may seem overwhelming in today’s political environment yet through a comic lens the playwright takes us on a humorous and engaging journey. The play follows Gus, a successful young artist who has high hopes to be included in an upcoming show at a prestigious museum. This year’s show is going to feature under represented and diverse artists and since Gus is white learns he is ineligible. Gus plays the victim role to the hilt even when he is told he might be included in next year’s exhibit. Patience is a virtue and Gus has very little. His lack of patience, sense of privilege, and massive victim mentality sets the play in motion.

One again, the Hippodrome Theatre has assembled a talented cast under the spirited direction of Ryan Hope Travis. Nick Bublitz plays Gus with gusto, verve, and effective entitlement. Nathaniel P. Claridad is Gus’s partner, an energetic English teacher who plays the foil to Gus and the others’ wild endeavors effectively. Katie Haeuser plays Jane, the

museum curator with delightful icy self assurance and sophistication. Chasity Hart is wonderful in the triple role as Vanessa an aspiring actress, Diana the muse and Balkonae a newly created artist. Erin Jester has created absolutely fantastical costumes for Diana and Balconae so Chasity Hart can take powerful command of the stage. At one point Chasity declares "I am a damn delight!" Is she ever!

The well-paced production keeps the audience absorbed in the characters' situations as they develop. Tim Dygert's predominately white set is the perfect environment so all the characters pop under Robert P Robins expert lighting.

"White" is running now through April 14. Tickets can be purchased at TheHipp.org or by calling (352) 375-4477.

Kevin Marshall for "Gainesville Theatre Review"