

T H E
POST  STAR

Glens Falls, New York

Your Hometown Newspaper since 1904

www.poststar.net

ATF's last show of season is a delight

By **BOB ROSE**

Special to The Post-Star

GLENS FALLS ♦ The Adirondack Theatre Festival's final production of its ninth season is a beautifully directed, meticulously acted thought-provoking one-act play. "The Unexpected Man" by Yasmina Reza is about two human beings of different backgrounds, each building a fascination about the other and silently exploring the possibility of openly communicating.

They're seatmates on a train speeding from Frankfurt to Paris. He is a famous writer.

She is an enchanted reader of his books. Each wishes to speak to the other but neither has the courage,

fearful mostly of being repulsed or embarrassed. So they send their thoughts out directly to the audience until

the final moments when they converse eagerly, in fact, passionately, to each other. A world of possibilities has suddenly opened for them right there on the train.

At first, he comes over as a man trapped in his own bitterness toward life and his many regrets. His thoughts range from his sexual or near sexual encounters to whether Ex-Lax is good for one's health. Turning to more serious matters, he observes that one's life is spent doing not what one would like to do, but what one is capable of doing.

Commenting on broken friendships and other disappointments, he vows that his latest book will be his last.

She carries a copy of that book in her handbag but hesitates to bring it out. In her mind she questions his negativity toward life as she finds expressed in his books. Around her comments about her own

disappointing love affairs, she questions his motives as a writer, accusing him of liking to be pursued but never understood.

Both are concerned about never being able to control time or loneliness. Gradually, they seem to have much in common. Eventually they speak and while he finds himself being critical of his writing, she defends him and his book, saying he should not be so bitter.

So well do Jordan Charney, portraying the writer, and Peggy Scott, the admiring reader, act their roles that one can't help but be drawn into their dilemma and hope that there will be a meeting of minds. Director Jeremy Cohen has them attracting our attention

from the start.

Movement is limited, but on the few occasions when they imagine themselves leaving their seats and approaching each other, the interest and tension mount.

A warm and compassionate piece of human drama, the play has occasional amusing touches as the two recall their pasts and attempt to unite.

Their efforts are awkward and silently ridiculous at times. But their best natures eventually unite and the curtain call applause expresses the audience's full approval.

"The Unexpected Man" proves a most fitting close to a brilliant artistic season for ATF despite its being beset by financial and locational challenges.

REVIEW