

NEWS RELEASE

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***Our Town* live on stage at Park Hall in Ben Lomond**

Mountain Community Theater presents Thornton Wilder's Pulitzer Prize-winning play about the warmth, joy, and sorrow of life, love, and death.

BEN LOMOND, CA – Those who hear “Our Town” and think “simple,” or “quaint,” or “high school” are in for a surprise. MCT’s new production of Thornton Wilder’s great, Pulitzer Prize-winning drama is designed to make the play come alive in an intimate, transformed, Park Hall setting, and to breathe great gusts of life into the script that has been produced thousands of times all over the world. MCT is using Wilder’s original script, rather than the more sugary sweet version that is usually performed. This production retains Wilder’s biting commentary on human foibles, as well as his powerful insights into the human condition, juxtaposed with his great compassion and gentle humor.

The story is deceptively straightforward. It depicts the lives of the neighboring Webb and Gibbs families and other inhabitants of the small New Hampshire town of Grover’s Corners. We follow members of the two families as they go about their daily lives, fall in love, marry, and die. But the play is not simple. Characters move easily between the past and present, and between the living and the dead. The dead talk to each other. Using theatrical devices that are as uncommon today as they were when the play was first produced in 1938, Wilder constantly reminds the audience that they are seeing a play, at the same time that he draws them into the characters’ lives and asks them to share the characters’ fears, struggles, triumphs, joys, and losses. As the New York Post said of the original production, “Beautiful and remarkable; one of the sagest, warmest and most deeply human scripts to have come out of our theater. . . . A spiritual experience.”

“The play has this remarkable ability to make us both laugh and cry by using completely natural language and common, unremarkable occurrences,” says director Peter Gelblum, who returns to Mountain Community Theater after directing 2010’s *The Goat, or Who Is Sylvia*. “At the same time, it hits the high points of most people’s lives – birth, marriage, and death – and provides moving, profound insights that we can all apply to our everyday lives.” The cast includes Santa Cruz theater veterans Rita Wadsworth, MarNae Taylor, Michael LaMère, Arindam Krishna Das, Shannon Kerr, Emily Olsen, and Spencer Bullock.

There are nine performances over three weekends starting December 2nd at Park Hall in Ben Lomond, just 17 minutes away from downtown Santa Cruz. Friday and Saturday performances are at 8 pm, and Sunday matinees are at 2 pm. Tickets are \$18 for general admission, and \$15 for students and seniors, except for opening weekend (December 2-4), when prices are \$15 for general admission and \$12 for students and seniors. For more information, visit www.mctshows.org.

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Mountain Community Theater is Santa Cruz County's longest continuously running community theater company. MCT is a member-run non-profit organization that derives its support primarily from performance proceeds and charitable donations. To arrange an interview, email or call Chris Clayton at chris@santacruzrealestateteam.com or 831-588-8078.