

***The Dining Room* at Playmakers is a 'must see'**

by **Desiree Waguespack**

The Dining Room, currently in production at Playmakers community theatre, features six actors, **Ronda Powell, John Chetta, Kristin Dugas, Calvin Bulliot, Angelique LaCour** and **Mack Maginnis**, who shine as they play more than 40 different roles in 17 overlapping vignettes, all set around a family dining room table.

What holds this poignant comedy together is its affectionate focus on a bygone era, when families actually dined together in a formal dining room. Guaranteed to leave the audience nostalgic for a slower, more genteel culture, this comedy is a must see for audiences of all ages.

Written for the stage by A.R. Gurney, and superbly directed for Playmakers by **Maya Levy**, *The Dining Room* showcases the talents and versatility of the six actors, who effortlessly, and almost simultaneously, portray mothers, fathers, giddy teenagers, energetic youngsters, elderly grandparents and domestic servants.

The costumes are basic black and the characters use sharp dialogue, facial expressions, body language and a few well-chosen accessories, such as an apron, cigar, hats, wigs, a string of pearls or eyeglasses, to communicate their age and stage in life.

Powell is also credited

with transporting her entire dining room -- table, sideboard, chairs, china, crystal, silver, Oriental rugs and linens -- to the Playmakers stage for the production. Keeping it in the family is her husband, **A.C. Powell, III**, who serves as the backstage chef.

Producer **Donna Heier**, Stage Manager **Erin Ketry** and Lighting Technicians **Kathryn Steel** and **Alex LaVanway** work well together to ensure a smooth transition between the fast-paced scenes.

Trisha Duffy Vitrano serves as the set artist, while **Ellen O'Connell** handles publicity and **Wendy Schneider** coordinates graphic design and the program.

Performances of *The Dining Room* continue Sept. 22, 23, 29, 30 at 8 p.m., with 2 p.m. matinees on Sept. 24 and Oct. 1. Playmakers is located at 19106 Playmakers Rd., north of Covington off Louisiana 437 (Lee Road). For reservations call 893-1671.

If available, tickets will be sold at the door.



Six talented actors -- Calvin Bulliot, Kristin Dugas, John Chetta and, standing, Angelique LaCour, Mack Maginnis, Rhonda Powell-- enact a series of comedic and poignant vignettes in the Playmakers entertaining presentation of *The Dining Room*, which continues on stage at the community theatre through Oct. 1. (photo by Jim O'Connell)