

Calvin Klein Underwear



BUY 1, GET 2ND 50% OFF
exclusions apply.


SHOP NOW ▶
FREE SHIPPING WITH \$99 PURCHASE

Choose a city...

Search



Sign In | Register

Please note: You are viewing an unpublished preview of this article that is not cleared for public consumption. Do not share or post the URL of this page to any third party.

Close Up Space

by Winnie McCroy

EDGE Editor

Monday Dec 19, 2011



Jessica DiGiovanni, David Hyde Pierce, and Michael Chernus in "Close Up Space" (Source:Joan Marcus)

Editors tend to be a persnickety breed, hovering over manuscript with red pen in hand, obsessed with the subtleties of grammar, cutting away the extraneous redundancies, adding the typographical signs for proofreading marks like the titular "close up space".

So it is with the character portrayed by Tony- and four-time Emmy Award Winner David Hyde Pierce in Molly Smith Metzler's "Close Up Space", now playing at Manhattan Theater Club at the New York City Center.

Directed by Leigh Silverman, the play follows Paul Barrow (Hyde Pierce), an obsessive book editor on a major deadline. His finicky top writer, Vanessa Finn Adams (Rosie Perez), is threatening to bail on him,

and his new intern Bailey from Vassar (Jessica DiGiovanni) is clueless enough to ignore his instructions of making eye contact with Vanessa seriously, and to refrain from pronouncing her last name as though it is hyphenated.

His office manager Steve (Obie Award winner Michael Chernus) is living in the common room in a one-man tent, and cooking Spam over a camp stove. And to top it off, his estranged daughter Harper (Colby Minifie) has been kicked out of yet another fancy prep school -- for climbing the flagpole naked and blasting Russian music across the quad.

However, the real problem is the death of Paul's wife Gloria, a famous writer with a suicidal case of depression. Although she has been dead for five years, Paul has yet to deal with it, having whitewashed her influence [and her daughter] from his home, and thrown himself headfirst into his career.

As the play opens, Paul stands before an overhead projector, editing the myriad e-mails and letters sent from Oliver Norwood, Academic Dean of Santa Catalina Academy, asking him to pick up his now-expelled daughter.

Paul has always fallen short when it comes to Harper, from her infant scream sessions to her adolescent hunger strike to her dalliance with arson at 10 to her teenage X-Acto knife stabbing of a friend who disinvited her to a Jonas Brothers' concert.

When her mother, who pacified Harper, dies, whatever tenuous connection the two had was severed. After Harper takes a sledgehammer to the sunroom where her mother killed herself and leaves hundreds of Post-It notes around the house that say, "Fuck you, Dad", he gives up and sends her away to school.

Balancing Paul's high-strung nature is slacker office manager Steve, a stepchild of someone's brother-in-law who is camping at the office because his pit bull Xena favors his roommate Frank.

Unlikely the most likeable character in the play, Steve tries to connect with Paul, sharing his problems and encouraging Paul to "purge." He even knows how to deal with the imperious Vanessa, who storms into the office screaming, "I like Oxford commas, Paul!" and "You motherfucker!"

As a best-selling author from New Jersey, Perez's character is a variation on every character she plays -- an outspoken city girl with a deep accent. Notwithstanding, she does a fine job in the play, even while delivering lines like, "You want to take a clean manuscript and make it look like a used maxi pad and then get thanked in the fucking acknowledgements?"

To her credit, Paul has crossed out pages 82-149 of her latest opus, and written, below "The End," the word, "Finally." She knows that other writers have ditched him for pushing them too hard, and threatens to leave Tandem Books for another publisher if he doesn't give her work its due.

However, as self-involved as she is, even Vanessa can see that Paul's life came to a standstill after Gloria died, saying, "Your e-Harmony page is a cry for help...My name's Paul and my wife is dead?"

Calvin Klein Underwear



BUY 1, GET 2ND 50% OFF
exclusions apply.

SHOP NOW ▶
FREE SHIPPING WITH \$99 PURCHASE



Gay United States - Sign up!

Want daily stories about gay United States delivered to your inbox? Sign up for our newsletter - just type your email below:

Enter email here

Submit





10 YEARS OF
EDGE
365 gifts
 Today's Fabulous Prize
 Want it? Click it!

This Week's Most Popular



Block Party @ Mova :: February 1, 2014

The Mova Block Party was a great time featuring the Andrew Christian Underwear Runway Show, along with DJ's Tracy Young, LaTrice and Miik. Check out the photos.



Sunday Service @ Sanky's :: February 2, 2014

Sunday Service is one of those hard-to-find parties that have been an amazing success from day one and by now has become one of the best parties NYC has seen in a long time, where new school meets old school and a great time for all is guaranteed.



F#*K'N Classy Thursdays @ Score :: February 6, 2014

F#*K'N Classy Thursdays at Score was hosted by Chyna Girl and Danny Ferro, with DJ Daisy

That's not how you take a lover, Paul."

Given its wealth of witty dialogue, "Close Up Space" is a surprisingly moving, heartbreaking play about love and loss, and the strained relationships that death brings into a family.

Therefore, when Harper shows up in a fur ushanka hat speaking Russian with a cooler full of snowballs à la poet Anna Akhmatova, Vanessa leaves Paul to deal with the mess. Speaking in Russian for much of the play, Minifie does an excellent job with the role, her passion, loss, and hatred rising off her like steam.

Bailey flees, but Steve tries to make a connection, saying, "Hey Oksana Baiul...I manage this office. What up babygirl, how you doing." He brings her a Happy Meal, which she takes gratefully, but later crushes under her heel.

She tries to share her pain through the words of the Russian poet, saying, "Each day, my sadness rages in a daze. It fumes, desiring a grand donation. I used to answer it while covering my face...But I have no more tears or explanations."

But Paul defaults to his piles of work, and sends Harper to Puget Sound Academy. She returns at night to distract Steve with a Central Park camping trip, and has her cronies empty all the furniture in Paul's office -- including Vanessa's original, hand-written manuscript (which she drops off at the author's home).

Vanessa comes by to tell him that she is leaving him, and Steve stands up for himself as a newly formed alpha male (thanks to Harper). Both tell Paul it is time to read the Russian writing on the wall.

When Harper confronts her father, she tells him how she was forced to read her mother's last work, "Feather of a Dove" in English class. She accuses him of having been too much of an editor and not enough of a protector to his ailing wife.

"She was the most vivid, huge, unstoppable, funny, colorful, amazing woman and you didn't do anything for her -- you just made her write!" she says.

Harper leaves for St. Petersburg, and through a cathartic purging in Steve's tent, Paul finally comes to terms with the loss of his wife and the estrangement of his daughter. He composes a letter to her, admitting that he should have done more for Gloria, but couldn't.

And in a tearjerker ending, Paul writes, "I miss her, too" in red pen on his beloved overhead projector. The final scene finds him walking in the snow, crossing paths with his daughter, and finally taking a step toward her.

Given its wealth of witty dialogue, "Close Up Space" is a surprisingly moving, heartbreaking play about love and loss, and the strained relationships that death brings into a family.

Hyde Pierce is pitch-perfect as anal-retentive editor Paul Barrow, and Chernus is engrossing and likeable in the role of a dimwitted by well-meaning Brooklynite. And Minifie steals the show as Harper, a neglected daughter driven by loneliness and rage to Russian poetry.

The set, by Todd Rosenthal with lighting by Matt Frey, is authentic and clever. With stage right as Paul's office and stage left as the common room, aka "Steve's campsite," the leather couches, desks, Oriental rugs, exposed brick walls, display books, and fish tank are all very apropos. When Paul's office is robbed, the pedestal that the set lies upon moves back into the wall quite cleverly. And the simple but fitting costumes by Emily Rebholz do their job in bringing reality to the characters' lives.

Fans of "Frasier" will find much to like in Hyde Pierce's slapstick humor, as he exhibits plenty of what we came to love in his character, Niles Crane. But this talented actor also finds his way into our hearts with the touching, tear-jerking performance he shares in "Close Up Space."



"Close Up Space" runs through February 5 at MTC at New York City Center, 131 W. 55th St. For info or tickets call 212-581-1212 or visit www.ManhattanTheatreClub.com

Winnie McCroy is the Women on the EDGE Editor, HIV/Health Editor, and Assistant Entertainment Editor for EDGE Media Network, handling all women's news, HIV health stories and theater reviews throughout the U.S. She has contributed to other publications, including The Village Voice, Gay City News, Chelsea Now and The Advocate, and lives in Brooklyn, New York, where she writes about local restaurants in her food blog, <http://brooklyniscookin.blogspot.com/>

D. EDGE has the photos.



Follow EDGE

Stay up to date with gay United States breaking news, arts reviews, interviews, giveaways and more:



EDGE Media Network page on Facebook
Like You, Katherine Gleason and 81,414 others like this.



EDGE Media Network on Twitter
Follow @EdgeOnTheNet



Enter your email address below to receive daily email updates:

Enter email here

Submit

Win Free Stuff!

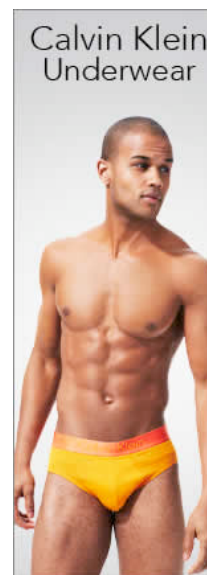


"White Women" from Chromeo!

In Philadelphia



Philly Gets Its Gay On at OutFest




BUY 1, GET 2ND 50% OFF
exclusions apply.
SHOP NOW
FREE SHIPPING WITH \$99 PURCHASE
macy's


[Back to: Home](#)




Inside EDGE



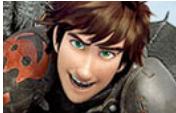
Anger = Action :: Ryan Murphy and 'Normal Heart' Cast Talk About HBO Film




The Rainbow Road in 'Silicon Valley'




Neon Trees' Tyler Glenn :: The Happiest Version Of Himself



Dragons Rule The Sky In Sequel to 2010 Hit



Channing Tatum & Jonah Hill :: On Bromance, Stunts & Sequels



Obsessions, by EDGE



Discover the **PREZISTA®** EXPERIENCE
Ask your healthcare professional about PREZISTA®



PREZISTA®
(darunavir) tablets
Click here to learn more.

Network Partners

- Atlanta, GA
 - Boston, MA
 - Chicago, IL
 - Dallas, TX
 - Denver, CO
 - Ft. Lauderdale, FL
 - Fire Island, NY
 - Las Vegas, NV
 - Los Angeles, CA
 - Miami, FL
 - New Orleans, LA
- New York, NY
 - New England
 - Orlando, FL
 - Palm Springs, CA
 - Philadelphia, PA
 - Providence, RI
 - Provincetown, MA
 - San Diego, CA
 - San Francisco, CA
 - Seattle, WA
 - United States
 - Washington, DC
- BARTab
 - Bay Area Reporter
 - Bay Windows
 - Damron LGBT Travel
 - HotSpots! Magazine

Things to do

- Learn about EDGE
- Read about our New Design
- Subscribe to RSS Feeds
- Visit our Press Room
- Get Newsletters
- Advertise
- Work at EDGE
- Write Feedback
- Read Privacy Statement
- Read Terms of Use
- Contact Us

Email Updates

Enter your email address below to receive daily email updates including news, giveaways and more.

[About Us](#) | [Privacy](#) | [Terms of Use](#) | [Newsletters](#) | [Advertise](#) | [Careers](#) | [Feedback](#) | [Contact Us](#)
Make EDGE your home page
Copyright © 2003-2014
EDGE Publications, Inc. / All Rights Reserved
Homotech and YouShoot are registered trademarks of EDGE Publications Inc.
98.14.91.156