

Adam Bock's *Five Flights*

Showed Feb. 21 – March 23, 2003 at Actors' Theatre.

Winner of the Glickman Award for Best New Play. Awarded by theater critics from the San Francisco Chronicle, the Bay Guardian, the Oakland Tribune and the San Jose Mercury News.

Wrens, loons, hummingbirds, and a pair of professional hockey players populate this laugh-out-loud comedy about siblings who must decide the fate of an aviary built by their recently deceased father. The original, sold-out San Francisco production of "Five Flights" received rave reviews and was extended for five months. Don't miss the Central Coast Premiere of this hot new script from Bay Area playwright Adam Bock.



Reviews from the current Pisces Moon Productions performances:

"brilliant and comedic . . . These nutty characters personify greater pieces of humanity: religion, science, people who listen, people who don't. There is a fresh, raw, naturalness to the players and each brings something different and dynamic to the stage . . . Everything about "Five Flights" works - wonderfully." - Christa Martin, Good Times Entertainment Weekly - [See Full Review](#)

"sharp and heartfelt . . . a play that evokes spirit, both in the mystical sense that Olivia evokes and in the sense of lost and tragic love, both familial and romantic. It's both funny and touching." - Wallace Baine, Santa Cruz Sentinel [See Full Review](#)

"brilliant . . . this one was a knockout - everything from the writing to the directing to the acting . . . it's must-see" - Greg Archer, Editor, Good Times

"Myer manages the neat trick of keeping her audience in stitches while never losing sight of the story's poignancy, and she does it with ease. Timing is excellent and her cast works together perfectly, seamlessly blending subtle character development with splendid comedic effects. . . Get your tickets soon; this will be a sell out hit."
-- Ann Bennett, Register-Pajaronian



'Flights' Soars

by Christa Martin - The Good Times Weekly

Somewhere in the middle of the play "Five Flights" heads start bobbing; four heads to be exact. This happens during a scene with no dialogue, just pure music from a ballet. Traditionally, watching someone watch something in a play is absolutely boring, but in "Five Flights" it's brilliant and comedic, thanks to director Susan Myer. She and co-producer Christopher Sugarman of Pisces Moon Productions have yet again pulled off another dynamic show. Their company deserves the praise it receives, which was proved during a long applause on opening night that demanded the actors come back for a second curtain call.

Like the always amazing Shakespeare Santa Cruz and Cabrillo Stage, Pisces Moon Productions has become a top-notch theater company in town whose fans expect outstanding productions. Here's why: they take bold risks, but will not compromise theatrical values. Myer finds outstanding actors and powerful scripts. And, her directing lives up to the accolades from her cast who call her work "genius."

"Five Flights" is an original play, only performed once before in 2002 in San Francisco. It featured a different cast, but won rave reviews. The gifted playwright is Adam Bock who writes dialogue exactly how people speak. This is unusual in that we watch the actors never finish their lines, or sometimes they repeat themselves, all on purpose. And the result is a fluid script that moves fast, speaks loudly and captures the way that people talk in every day life. The writing itself is one of the stars of this show. But of course, it must share the spotlight with a stellar cast and director.

Bock has created a tale about Ed (Christopher Sugarman) and his sister Adele (Heather Huber-Brown) whose father recently died. They inherited a plot of land on which is situated a ramshackle aviary that their father built to house various birds, including one bird that he believed was his wife's reincarnated soul. Ed, who is gay, meets Tom (Jeff Dinnell) and the two explore a potential romance, but it's not without some baggage. Jane (Becky Armor) is Ed and Adele's sister-in-law, who wants to see the aviary torn down and replaced with a housing development. Adele's best friend is Olivia, an oddball prophet (Kristen Vaughan) who has started a "bird religion" based on the fifth day of creation, when God created birds. Olivia wants to see the aviary transformed into a church. Andre (Daniel David Doane) plays hockey in a professional league with Tom.

These nutty characters personify greater pieces of humanity: religion, science, people who listen, people who don't. There is a fresh, raw, naturalness to the players and each brings something different and dynamic to the stage. (The set was delightful and simple with autumn colored leaves strewn about the floor and pieces of gauze-like material draped from ceiling to floor.)

Sugarman, as "the beloved," offers one of his finest performances yet on a Santa Cruz stage. He is honest and present, almost with a natural film-like quality. Huber-Brown plays the listener and her performance is understated, fresh and natural. Jane, their sister-in-law is an irritating, brash, controlling woman, and kudos to Armor for portraying this unlikeable woman so well. The ever-impressive acting powerhouse Kristen Vaughan (the quirky prophet) has an enormous stage presence and embodies the role of Olivia with every perfect nuance. Jeff Dinnell, who plays Ed's love interest, Tom, has a great comedic presence and does an excellent job in his first full length play. Daniel David Doane (Andre the gruff hockey player) delivers enough "guy's guy" machismo without going over-the-top.

Everything about 'Five Flights' works wonderfully. This show, like Pisces Moon's last two shows will quickly become a hit.

"Five Flights" runs through March 23 at the Actors' Theater, 1001 Center St., Santa Cruz. Showtimes: 8 p.m. Thurs., Fri. & Sat.; 3 p.m. Sundays (3/16, 3/23). Tickets: \$12-\$15 (2-for-1 Thursday). For reservations, call 420-5260. For more information, call 425-PLAY or visit www.piscesmoon.com.

February 27, 2003, Wallace Baine, **The Santa Cruz Sentinel**

After successful run in S.F., 'Flights' takes wing in S.C.

Is there a thin line between comedy and tragedy?

Or is there no line at all?

You might have problems finding that line in "Five Flights," a new play by Bay Area writer **ADAM BOCK**, now being offered by Pisces Moon Productions at Actors' Theatre in Santa Cruz.

A densely textured script about hope and loss, enlivened with bird lore and hockey references, "Five Flights" comes to Santa Cruz after a successful five-month run last year in San Francisco.

SUSAN MYER'S sharp and heartfelt production centers on the story of a young brother-sister duo dealing with the death of their father and wondering what to do with an enormous house-size aviary their father built to house the spirit of their late mother (who was, according to Dad, reincarnated as a bird).

The cast of six includes siblings Ed and Adele; their sister-in-law Jane who wants to develop the property; Adele's friend Olivia who wants to turn the old aviary into the "Church of the Fifth Day" based on a religion that recognizes birds as spiritual icons; and a couple of hockey players: Tom who develops a crush on Ed, and Andre, the play's comic foil.

The moody set is dominated by a spread of fallen autumn leaves, an apt metaphor for the two principal players who seem to be adrift between the two opposing forces of Jane and Olivia. All the players present their characters with nuance and skill, but special mention should go to **KRISTEN VAUGHAN** who plays Olivia.

As the messianic figure of a new religion, Olivia has to carry the charisma of the true believer and Vaughan, mustering a whirlwind of spiritual energy, comes across believably as a zealous woman who thinks she's finally found the answer to a riddle she's been grappling with her entire life.

DANIEL DAVID DOANE, who plays the gruff and blustery Andre, gets some juicy scenes and his broad comic performance will likely be talked about the most (Andre will be played by Daniel Hughes this weekend before Doane returns Sunday).

In the end, "Five Flights" is a play that evokes spirit, both in the mystical sense that Olivia evokes

and in the sense of lost and tragic love, both familial and romantic. It's both funny and touching.

"Five Flights" plays through March 23. Thursday, Friday and Saturday shows are at 8 p.m.; Sunday shows at 3 p.m. at Actors' Theatre, 1001 Center St., Santa Cruz. Tickets are \$12 to \$15. Details: 425-PLAY.

