

The Magic of Story

There's a lot to love about Stefanie Zdravec's *The Electric Baby*. Her writing is fresh and distinct, earthy and poetic, honest and compassionate. Each of the play's eighteen scenes draw us in as compelling individual chapters and yet, taken together, they create a magically interwoven, hauntingly powerful, beautifully complete tale that rewards our faith in the power of story and our fundamental need for others.

Zdravec's play unfolds in unexpected and delightful ways. It implies, it suggests, it teases. It curves, it overlaps, it echoes, it dances, it floats. Like all good plays, it may confound expectations. And, like all good plays, it does not seek to falsely comfort us with simple answers to simple questions. Though a keenly intelligent play, it does not express itself through heady intellect or reason – rather, *The Electric Baby* operates from intuition, from instinct, from heart. Throughout the course of the play, Zdravec's wit, verve, and heroic soulfulness invites us to trust our own intuition and empathy as *Baby* works its storytelling magic.

Storytelling, folk tales, and folk lore have been an essential human impulse and basic human need for as long as we have existed. Stories let us draw meaning from existence. They tell us what it means to be human. They help us navigate the events of our lives. They are the expressions of our greatest fears and triumphs. When we hunger for truth and understanding, stories nourish us. When we are lost, they serve as a compass. When we feel alone in our struggles, they remind us that we're not. We need stories the same way we need food, water, shelter, love. Stories tell us who we are: as individuals, yes, but most crucially as interconnected and interdependent beings – as kin – that identify through shared experience.

A story that reminds us of our shared human experience, of our inevitable kinship, is always worth telling. In these days of bitter political and cultural rancor, of fracturing and fear, of growing separation and isolation, *The Electric Baby* offers us a beautiful and desperately important reminder that only by opening ourselves to another can we possibly begin to heal.

Collaborating on the creation of this production with the gifted and generous artists, craftspeople, technicians, staff, and leadership of the Arvada Center has been an extraordinary pleasure for me. On behalf of all of us, thanks for being here.

R I C K B A R B O U R

Director, *The Electric Baby*

THE ELECTRIC BABY FEBRUARY 9 – MAY 4

BLACK BOX THEATRE

Tickets: Starting at \$45 (Previews \$25)

Genre: *Magical Realism, Dark Comedy*

Content: *Best Enjoyed by Adults - Strong Language*

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