

Mira produces powerful. historical 'Resistance'

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VALLEJO — Mira Theatre Guild honors a remarkable man and unsung American hero — William Parker — with the world premiere of Richard Caulfield Goodman's play "Resistance."

Mira's choice to produce "Resistance," about the Underground Railroad, a network of over 3,000 homes where "conductors" facilitated a slave's flight to northern freedom, garnered allies. Resistance often does.

The mayor of Vallejo, Anthony Intintoli, proclaimed Feb. 23 "William Parker Day" and Vallejo Music Theatre resisted being anything but helpful by lending significant performance, production and tech support.

"Resistance" is a dramatization of true historical events occurring in September 1851 in Christiana, Penn., as recounted in February and March 1866 articles by the editor of the Atlantic Monthly who . . . ("wove the) facts" as reported by escaped slave William Parker, "into a story . . . (supporting) the . . . right of southern blacks . . . (to vote)."

The story is told through the eyes of a sympathetic Quaker woman. Maryland slaveholder Ed Gorsuch, a U.S. Marshall, and deputized whites demand to search Parker's home, a stop on the underground railroad. Parker refuses and a white



Review

"Resistance"

Mira Theatre Guild

Dates: 8 p.m.

March 2, 3, 9 and 10; 2 p.m.
March 4 and 11

Admission: \$15 adults, \$12
for seniors and students

Address: Old Federal Building,
823 Marin St., Vallejo

Info: 649-1053

★★★ (OUT OF FOUR)

passerby, Castner Hanaway, refuses to be deputized.

A melee ensues and Gorsuch dies. Parker flees to Canada and a Pennsylvania congressman journeys from political expediency to principle by assisting in obtaining an acquittal of over 30 tried for treason.

The set, lighting and costumes are modest and the venue is without heat, so bring warm clothes. The production has structural and creative flaws and the MTG troupe and script would benefit from more rehearsal time and perhaps some 'workshopping.'

Nonetheless, I can not resist recommending that individuals, families and school children see this production and support Mira. Taken in the context of a laudable, selfless attempt of a multi-hatted cast, crew and production staff to resurrect storied Mira and the irrepressible importance of



Courtesy photo

Back row, from left: Nolan Mecham as Thaddeus Stevens and Lamont Young as William Parker. Front row, from left: Stacey Loew as Anna Moran and Sandra Risser as Quaker woman.

this history, the fixable faux pas of the production pale in comparison.

We must always celebrate the lessons that illegitimate power cannot sustain itself nor resist its own corruption. Furthermore, resistance of oppression is infectious and highly communicable whereas failure to resist evil is an insidious and

malignant disease.

So resist staying at home. Resist remaining a bit too ignorant of some very important American history. Resist not inviting a friend and resist not doing your part to help MTG survive and thrive.

Families must see this, schools should visit and our ethnically diverse community

will leave the theater a little more of an American, a little more connected and a little more resistant to prejudice, bigotry and hate.

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