

"5 Lesbians Eating a Quiche"

By BRUCE WEIS



Photo by CAI HALL

The cast of "5 Lesbians Eating a Quiche," presented at Cinema on the Sound during August: (l. to r.): Tygar Hall, Stephanie Bonner, Antonia Marrero, Cassandra Giovine and Lina Sarrello.

Jerry Landi has a mission. Chef at the Clipper Café by day, he spends his spare time converting a former antique shop into a City Island performance space. Cinema on the Sound at 270 City Island Avenue, although not fully evolved, has been up and running for some time. The space is quaint and intimate, with about 50 seats, and up to this point the theater has mainly presented (mostly classic) movies that have drawn Jerry's attention.

This changed with the August presentation of "5 Lesbians Eating a Quiche" by the All-Hands Theater Company. Cinema on the Sound has clearly entered new territory, and City Island can look forward to an ever-expanding catalogue of performance types from the venue.

"5 Lesbians Eating a Quiche" is a high-concept show. The play itself is a farce, meant to be ridiculous, but it brings many 1956 truths to the fore along with the humor. Written by Evan Linder and Andrew Hobgood in 2012 and directed by Island resident Tygar Hall, the story opens with the Susan B. Anthony Society for the Sisters of Gertrude Stein holding its annual quiche breakfast, in, oddly enough, a bomb shelter. As the assembled crowd awaits the announcement of the society's prize-winning quiche, air raid sirens sound! Have we suffered an atomic attack from the Communists? Can the quiches outside the shelter be saved? How will the society respond as their idyllic town and lifestyle face attacks? In short, the story presents 1956-era elements—the omnipresent fear of nuclear war juxtaposed with the cult of female domesticity.

The play was presented enthusiastically and interactively by the All-Hands Theater Company as a sort of theater-in-

the-round. Each audience member was assigned a character name as he or she entered and was then randomly pulled into the action of the play. I myself learned that I had been acting suspiciously at a party the day before. Some poor devil who had forgotten his quiche was roasted throughout the evening.

The play is crammed with increasingly obvious innuendo. The ladies ask what sort of society member wants to put sausage—horrors, meat!—in a quiche, that pure vehicle of egg? Then there were the constant references to eggs. Something to do with the society's founder, although the feminine attributes of eggs are merely hinted at. Finally, at the official quiche tasting, one of the tasters gets carried away and dives head first (make that tongue first) into the winning entry.

"5 Lesbians Eating a Quiche" was first written as a 10-minute playlet before it was developed into a full-length play. The show was a hit at the 2012 New York Fringe Festival before settling into an extended run at the SoHo Playhouse. The All-Hands Theater Company's production of the show featured Stephanie Bonner, Cassandra Giovine, Tygar Hall, Antonia Marrero and Lina Sarrello. There wasn't a weak link in this chain, as all of them turned in great performances.

Nearly all backstage tasks were also handled by the play's actors (an impressive feat) except for the lighting by Eddie Jackson, banner design by Wes Roundtree and poster design by Ryan Bedford. The producer was Cai Hall.

All performances of the play were to sold-out houses. We look forward to more productions of this caliber from Cinema on the Sound.