

You're A Good Man, Charlie Brown opens at the Village Playhouse



By Tony Pearson

The kite-eating tree, the little red-haired girl, Lucy the psychiatrist (‘The doctor is in?’), Snoopy versus the Red Baron – almost everyone has memories from ‘Peanuts’, the beloved comic strip by Charles Schultz, which ran for nearly fifty years and spawned many books, TV shows – and an award-winning musical *You're A Good Man, Charlie Brown*, which opened this week at the Bancroft Village Playhouse. As Charlie, Lucy, Linus, Schroeder, Sally, Snoopy, and Woodstock come to life on stage, the continuing relevance of Schultz’s observations on life, such as ‘Happiness is five different crayons’, or ‘It’s hard on a face when it gets laughed at’, becomes apparent. The play explores issues like personal insecurity, difficult family relationships, and the nature of friendship through humour and song. Wisdom is dispensed with a constant smile and a lot of outright laughs.

The play follows a day in the life of Charlie Brown – one including a book report, a glee club rehearsal, a baseball game, and Snoopy’s fervent celebration of the delights of supertime (‘What’s wrong with making mealtime a joyous occasion?’). And while there are lots of occasions for Charlie to exclaim ‘Good Grief’, in the end, he and the rest of his friends discover that as long as you try your best and make the most out of what’s you’re given, you are in fact a Good Man. This leaves Charlie to proclaim in the closing number: ‘Happiness is anyone and anything at all that’s loved by you’.