



The Sunshine Boys

Neil Simon

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Full Length, Comedy / 5m, 2f / Scenery: Interior Al and Willie as "Lewis and Clark" were top-billed vaudevillians for over forty years. Now they aren't even speaking. When CBS requests them for a "History of Comedy" retrospective, a grudging reunion brings the two back together, along with a flood of memories, miseries and laughs.

"It's ham on wry...Simon's sure footed craftsmanship and his one liners are as exquisitely apt as ever."-New York Post

"Delicious and oddly affecting."-T

The Sunshine Boys Details

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From Reader Review The Sunshine Boys for online ebook

Tony says

THE SUNSHINE BOYS. (1973). Neil Simon. ***.

In spite of my intent to read all of Neil Simon's plays, I've decided to stop with this one. I don't know how many there are left, but whatever the number, it's too many. Simon was a success on Broadway with a string of not-so-funny comedies. I suspect that they were successful mostly because they didn't insult too many members of the audience and that the humor exhibited fell into well-worn channels. Taken individually, each play was familiar. There were no breakthroughs into new genres of comedy; the audience member could sit and be comfortable with what was likely to come. This play explores the history of a comedic duo – one that had been together for over forty years. They are at the end of their career, however, and have been asked to give one more performance of a skit that they made famous in vaudeville. The comic pair likely hated each other, but only because that's what they were supposed to do. Needless to say, the repeat of their classic skit leads to a showdown that neither of them expected – though we in the audience did. This was another tried and true situation that Simon tried to inject life into, but was less than successful. I have to admire Simon's success with his series of plays. Turns out, however, that they were truly not for me.

Bobby Sullivan says

Didn't find this one all that funny.

Justin says

The alternate title could have been "Two Jews Arguing"; which in turn constitutes about 98% of all show business...a very entertaining play, and a cynical but well-meaning love letter to the great vaudeville duos - particularly Weber and Fields, who are said to have served as the inspiration for the play.

Maryanne says

The Sunshine Boys

June 19 - June 29, 2014

by Neil Simon

Harriet S. Jorgensen Theatre

Buy Tickets Online

40 years ago Lewis and Clark were the biggest names lighting up the vaudeville stages. Now they will return to take center stage on television in a CBS special on the history of comedy. The only problem is they haven't spoken in years.

Jerry Adler, last seen on CRT's stage in the smash hit comedy I'm Connecticut, returns as Willie Clark. Richard Kline, of television's Three's Company makes his CRT debut as Al Lewis. Neil Simon's writing and sharp one-liners provide non-stop laughs and a nostalgic glimpse of life on and off the stage. The Sunshine Boys captures the fading days of vaudeville, and provides a hysterical road map to the comedy of today.

R.K. Cowles says

4 1/2 stars

Ahmad Sharabiani says

The sunshine boys: a comedy in two acts, the collected plays of Neil Simon, Vol 3, Neil Simon The Sunshine Boys is a 1975 American comedy film directed by Herbert Ross and produced by Ray Stark, released by Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer and based on the play of the same name by Neil Simon, about two legendary (and cranky) comics brought together for a reunion and revival of their famous act. The cast included real-life experienced vaudevillian actor George Burns as Lewis, Walter Matthau as Clark, and Richard Benjamin as Ben, with Lee Meredith, F. Murray Abraham, Rosetta LeNoire, Howard Hesseman, and Ron Rifkin in supporting roles. This would be Matthau's last Neil Simon movie until 1982's I Ought to Be in Pictures with Ann-Margret and Dinah Manoff.

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Brian McCann says

Neil Simon at his best. Bravo!

Neil Schleifer says

Human relationships are complex -- competitive, sentimental, frustrating and, as Neil Simon sees them, very, very funny. The comedy duo once known as The Sunshine Boys are a paradox -- a pair of aging vaudeville comics whose relationship over the course of some fifty years, is anything but sunny. Facing the challenges of growing old and becoming forgotten, the pair grasp at the chance to be in the spotlight one last time with

varying degrees of enthusiasm. But can they overcome the long-held grudge of their bitter break-up long enough to make America laugh again?

Simon, a master of both comedy and pathos, examines the complimentary natures of the men at the center of this story: one a bitter curmudgeon who insists on the fiction that he is both independent and still in-demand as a performer, and the other having settled into the twilight of retirement in the purgatory of New Jersey. Simon looks at the psychology of comedy, at the heartbreakng nature of aging, and at the yin-and-yang of two old friends who seem to have nothing...and everything in common.

Playwright Simon provides neat character sketches of the pair at the center of this story, surrounding them with a collection of neat supporting characters like a neurotic nephew and a non-nonsense nurse. He gives us a glimpse of the "old days" by showing us a recreation of the old skit, while showing us the comedy that real life often unintentionally throws our way. Like many of the best of Simon's comedies, he will get you to laugh til you cry and cry til you laugh.

Mike says

I read this play in preparation for playing one of the two main roles. It's got some wonderful comedy between the old guys, and the farce scene, though dated and chauvinistic, still works pretty well. But it's overlong, and a lot of the first scene could be chopped down. The nephew acts as the old character's feed, or presents just exposition. There are also some curious casting issues: several of the actors barely appear for more than a few minutes, and even the nurse in the last act has only about ten minutes on stage. The economics of the modern theatre just wouldn't allow this kind of casting! LOL

Steve says

At times it feels like the Odd Couple, but it almost has a better premise - two retired comedians forced to reunite, despite wanting anything but. Perhaps this is Simon's most comfortable premise, but he certainly knows how to write two opposites for the stage.

Alborz Taheri says

Krisz says

Nehéz értékelni ezt a szöveget – kihívásra olvastam el, de annyiszor láttam már színházban/közvetítésben, hogy pontosan tudtam, miről szól...

Nagyon jó látképet ad az öregedésről, a szemellenzékről, a családi szeretetről, a partnerségről meg egy csomó minden másról, aki még nem látta/olvasta, annak ez egy jó kis olvasmány. (Én most untam.)

Misti says

I love Neil Simon normally, but this fell a bit flat for me.

Arghavan says

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Noran Miss Pumkin says

My father started me watching films in my single digits, and Walter Matthau was a God among actors to me. If I read it now, I might rate this less, but as a teen-it was great!
