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'MLM is for Murder' brings realism to comedy

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The Baldwin Bulletin

I recently saw Georgia College's production of "MLM (multilevel marketing) is for Murder" presented by its Department of Theatre & Dance. The production had a small cast on a small stage in the college's Black Box Theatre in downtown Milledgeville. Despite this, the show fully engrossed its audience with the actors' skill and unique use of simple sets to portray the realism of a small, messy apartment, the suffocating desk job, and the envious glamour of a snob's luxury home.

The play centers around Minerva Ross, a young woman coping with her dead-end graphic design job and her inner envy toward her wife who has found success and joy in education. While her wife leaves her dreaded parts of work at the door, Ross comes home complaining and stewing about her treatment at work. So, to escape the dread of her profession, she starts a true crime podcast focusing on women who kill.

The audience, alongside Ross, is introduced to her former high school bully Felicity Evanston. Evanston is a Mormon woman, "happily" married with a husband and two sons. Though



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The cast of "MLM is for Murder" against a backdrop of the clothes sold by the multilevel marketing consultants featured throughout the play.

she has an associates degree, she works as a housewife while her husband works full-time. And though she maintains a picture-perfect image, inside the home cracks show as Evanston seeks to fill the void of feeling like an afterthought in her own home. She's roped into a multilevel marketing scheme selling horrendous patterned leggings while slowly realizing

that the dream she was sold by the company only pertains to those at the top of the pyramid. The connection and womanhood are just facades coached by the competition who take all the good products; thus Evanston is led to eliminate them and earn back the money she lost.

As the bodies pile up and Ross begins tracking these

serial killings on her podcast, the two women are brought together in a collaboration, where Ross interviews Evanston as a potential next victim. This single moment between the two unlocked a flood of discussion about being stuck in a doomed job or role, being undermined by those with more education or money, being manipulated because someone

seeks to establish themselves, taking out their turmoil on others and losing people in the process, and much more.

The play and actors did a fantastic job framing no character as purely in the wrong or in the right. Ross' undermines a criminal investigation for fame and profit while disregarding how she's treated her wife, Evanston believes her actions are helping fight an unjust company while she takes innocent lives without much remorse, both of their spouses lash out at various moments without being able to calmly discuss the many emotions intertwined in their marriages, and much more.

The team behind "MLM is for Murder" use simple props as a single desk, two boxes of clothing, a single couch and table, and other single set pieces to create backdrops of the drama that each actor and actress fully embraced. I was thoroughly impressed by the quality and showmanship of these college students, who are still learning and growing to be able to produce shows.

Out of a 10, I'd give the show a high nine with the only retraction that I did leave the production with more questions than answers and a lacking feeling of closure due to the open-ended nature of the ending.