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The Humans (Revised TCG Edition)



Synopsis

Winner of the 2016 Tony Award for Best Play
Finalist for the 2016 Pulitzer Prize for Drama
Winner of the Outer Critics Circle Award for Outstanding New Broadway Play
Winner of the New York Drama Criticsâ™ Circle Award for Best Play
THE BEST PLAY OF THE YEAR • --The New York Times, The Washington Post, New York Magazine, Chicago Tribune, The Hollywood Reporter, Time Out New York, NPR
"Drawn in subtle but indelible strokes, Mr. Karam's play might almost qualify as deep-delving reportage, so clearly does it illuminate the current, tremor-ridden landscape of contemporary America. The finest new play of the Broadway season so far" --by a long shot.
Charles Isherwood, The New York Times
Breaking with tradition, Erik Blake has brought his Pennsylvania family to celebrate Thanksgiving at his daughter's apartment in lower Manhattan. Unfolding over a single scene, this "delirious tragicomedy" (Chicago Sun-Times) by acclaimed young playwright Stephen Karam "infuses the traditional kitchen-sink family drama with qualities of horror in his portentous and penetrating work of psychological unease" (Variety), creating an indelible family portrait.
Stephen Karam's plays include Speech & Debate and Sons of the Prophet, a finalist for the 2012 Pulitzer Prize and the winner of the 2012 Drama Critics Circle, Outer Critics Circle, Lucille Lortel and Hull-Warriner awards for Best Play. Born and raised in Scranton, Pennsylvania, he now lives in New York City, New York.

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Customer Reviews

"Don'tcha think it should cost less to be alive?" That line, which concludes the father's speech to his daughter's new live-in boyfriend, captures much of what this play is about. Karam gets

at the financial stress that burdens the middle-class in this period of stagnation. Jobs and pensions lost, dead-end jobs stoically endured for decades, caring for an aging parent while still holding down full-time jobs, etc. Karam shows the interconnections between these economic woes and the social and psychological burdens the family members also face: allegiance to one's childhood faith, struggles with weight, chronic health issues, the fear of NYC after 9-11, recovering from depression, use of anti-depressants, class differences, the importance of marriage, etc. Karam wonderfully avoids hitting one over the head with any of these issues; instead, they are subtly (and often humorously) invoked during conversations. What Karam doesn't make a conflict is also significant; we see here a family that has no problem with their daughter's/sister's homosexuality. Instead, each is incredibly supportive (mom even brings up scissoring during dinner). Nor is the young woman's depression due to her sexuality; instead, Karam suggests it has to do with the intersection of her ulcerative colitis and her worries about finding a new partner for life. Karam tackles these issues through comedy-drama instead of tragedy. This family supports one another, but they can also make some great jokes about each other. I haven't seen this on-stage yet, but Karam gives a good amount of text that is supposed to be conveyed non-verbally, and comedic actors and directors could do a lot with this.

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