

Becky wants a new life...or does she?

CLACKAMAS COMMUNITY COLLEGE OPENS 'BECKY'S NEW CAR' IN NIEMEYER CENTER

STORY BY PAIGE DEAN
WEB EDITOR

Photos by Jordy Villagomez

As Daylight Savings Time takes hold and the trees become bare, Jim Eikrem's crew has been working long hours on their newest production, "Becky's New Car." Making the right choice is something everyone struggles with, but what happens when we purposefully make the wrong one? "Becky's New Car," written in 2010 by Steve Dietz, follows a modern day woman who makes poor decisions for no good reason, all while the audience roots her on from the sidelines.

Our story revolves around Becky, skillfully played by Cami Kaylor; Becky is a hardworking, determined and relatable woman. However, when a chain of misunderstandings with a customer at the car dealership where she works presents the opportunity for a new life, Becky finds herself intrigued. Early on, Becky states, "When a woman says she needs new shoes, what she really wants is a new job. When she says she needs a new house, she wants a new husband. And when she says she wants a new car, she wants a new life."

Kaylor breathes life into this role, proving to be an amazing conversationalist, a gripping storyteller and emotionally relatable. Though her role may not be making the decisions she should, audience members fall in love with the character and take her side willingly. "You feel like you are sitting in someone's living room having a conversation with them," Kaylor said backstage, "you get really connected to the story and the characters."

Kyle Ward joins Kaylor as Becky's husband, Joe. Seamlessly settling into the role of a married man of many years, Ward accurately displays the complicated

emotions of long-time marriage. Though comfortable and tired, he shows just how much he cares for Becky and subsequently wins the hearts of the audience as the show goes on. "It was a process for me to break down the wall that I had built up coming into the show in the first place," Ward said. He described how working under Eikrem was a new and different experience than previous directors. Kaylor added, "he wants to try a lot of different ways of doing whatever it is that you are doing before deciding on the final."

Completing their family is Chris, played by Robbie Cantrell. Chris, 26 and living at home, adds to Becky's stress throughout the show. With a bad history of girlfriends and devotion to his study of psychology, the two struggle to relate to one another as he goes through this "phase called manhood." Cantrell embodies an insecure-but-secure college student the way that only a college student could; he is believably intelligent and seems to fully understand the complicated psychological explanations he describes. While rehearsing, Cantrell found a lot of similarities between himself and his character, Chris, saying, "my character is very me. They all ask me if I am in costume yet, but I am just in my regular clothes."

Mat Cornet plays Steve, the tragic comedic relief. While grieving the loss of his wife, Cornet uses his body language and lovable tone to put the audience in hysterics. "It's funny, but also has this incredibly visually stimulating set that was designed by Chris Whitten with the help of students in theater tech class," Cornet said. The set, designed as a game board, cleverly gives the message to the audience that life is a

game. As Becky makes trivial choices, the game plays on. Making his stage debut is Ryan Borgford as Walter, a wealthy widower who falls for Becky and sweeps her off her feet and into a new life. Borgford's interpretation of Walter is fittingly unrelatable but surprisingly wise; from growing a mustache for the role, to successfully getting many laughs from the crowd, Borgford shines in his first show. We're introduced to his way of living and the stark differences between his and Becky's. Walter's daughter Kenni, played by Rachel Polley, and neighbor Ginger, played by Savannah Pfalzgraff, add to the beautifully tangled plot web. Pfalzgraff speaks like an educated, wealthy woman while reminiscing about her past; however, while drinking at a party, we find she is full of buried feelings which hilariously complicate the story. In the role of Kenni, Polley shines as she portrays an array of emotions ranging from passionate love to fiery hatred. While learning more about her personal life, things only get more complicated.

As the story unravels, the audience finally gets to see the characters navigate the intricacies of their relationships — intricacies the audience has been privy to the whole time. The entire cast works together to tell a marvelously complicated, relatable and humorous story about choices. Eikrem has orchestrated another masterpiece with "Becky's New Car." The show runs in Niemeyer Center November 14 through November 24, Thursdays through Saturdays at 7:30 p.m., with a matinee on Sunday at 2:30 p.m. Tickets are \$12 for adults, \$10 for seniors, and admission is free for students. In addition, the theater offers a pay-what-you-can performance November 22 at 10 a.m.



Ryan Borgford and Kyle Ward play Walter and Joe.



Mat Cornet tells it like it is as Steve.



Kyle Ward and Ryan Borgford wheel Cami Kaylor into her new life.



Robbie Cantrell, who plays Chris, limbers up for a run.