



Patrick Webb

**Yvan, played by Marcus Liotta, left, reacts defensively when the assertive Marc, played by David Sweeney, seeks to express a reaction to their friend's modern art piece.**

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different words." French words linger in the translated script. "It's great language and has to be fully expressed," Bain said.

In an uninterrupted 90 minute session, contrasting characters examine the nature of friendship. The setting is a generic European apartment, though each character's home showcases a different painting.

Jeremiah Williams, acting in his first role in decades, plays Serge, a character who pays \$40,000 for a 4 by 5 foot canvas that is all white except for some white diagonal lines.

David Sweeney plays Marc, a cynical friend who tells Serge that the painting is ridiculous. Sweeney, a pastor at Calvary Episcopal Church in Seaside, is a stalwart of the Clatsop County theater scene, but fully acknowledged the play is a change of pace. "It is nice to get your teeth into something I have not done before," Sweeney said.

The director has appreciated his input. "He (Sweeney) has been around a long time and comes up with intelligent and apt choices," Bain said.

Marcus Liotta, who plays another of Serge's friends, recently opened Galactix, a taproom and arcade, in a renovated building across the street from the theater. Liotta, a son of longtime Oregon thespian Bob Liotta, spent part of his time in COVID quarantine training remotely with the Second City comedy troupe. Liotta drew on those lessons while building his charac-

ter. "It's a pretty involved role," Liotta said.

Some might say that a great friend is someone who will always stand by you, but will also tell you truths you may not want to hear. That's a concept which is severely tested in "Art."

"It's important to allow people to evolve," Bain noted, when asked for her insights on the nature of friendship. "There's a caution about being unkind to your friends. Unkind is too nice a word. While the characters fundamentally love each other, they can be brutal," she added.

The drama is sparked, in part, because Serge did not consult his friend before the art purchase. "There is an element of Marc feeling displaced by the painting, as he was the 'big dog' in the friendship — and he is not a 'modern-art person,'" Bain said.

"Serge sees something in it that speaks to him," Williams said. "He has his own ideas about what makes good art. He has found it and wants to share it with his friends."

Yvan, unhappy in his job and distracted by his upcoming wedding, tries to stay neutral and mollify both. "They like him because he is a breath of fresh air in this intellectual world," Bain said, "They appreciate him, but they all attack each other."

Bain describes her directing style as a process of discovery, beginning with a broad concept and then allowing actors to explore scenes at rehearsals. "This play is more of an intellectual pursuit. The comedy is different," Bain said.



**A white canvas art piece speaks to the tastes of Serge, played by Jeremiah Williams, in the Ten Fifteen Theater production of 'Art.'**

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