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## Wit, deception and great actors bring *Nude with Violin* to life

East York Mirror

By [Maria Tzavaras](#)

When some people die, they don't always take their secrets to the grave with them.

In *East Side Players* *Nude with Violin* by Noel Coward, famous French painter Paul Sorodin shocks his family with some revelations after his death, causing an unravelling of truths and consequences for his family and friends.

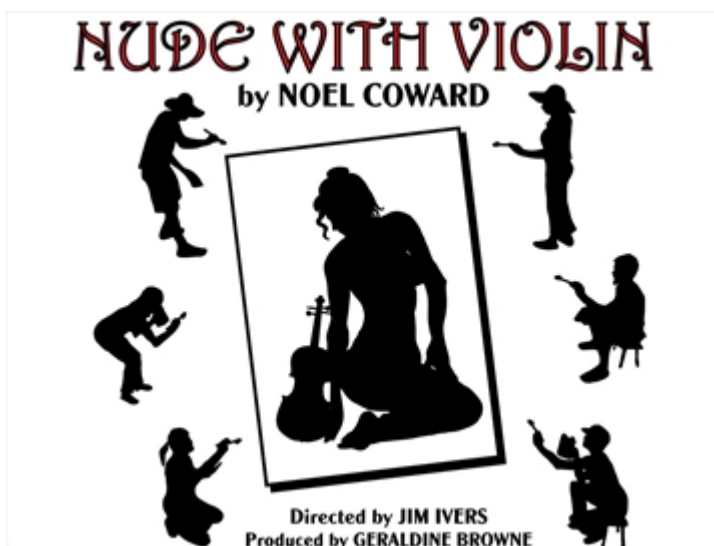
However, not everyone is left in the dark and those who are privy to the truth find some relief – and benefit – from revealing what they know.

In this case, Sorodin's valet Sebastien (Daryn DeWalt), received a letter from his employer a few months before his death, which he reads with enjoyment to Sorodin's estranged wife Isobel (Barbara Salsberg), his grown children Jane (Sarah St-Onge-Richards) and Colin (Edward Karek), his wife, Pamela (Lindsay Bryan) and art critic, Jacob (Damien Howard).

While Paul and Isobel have been separated for decades, they never divorced and Isobel and the children live in England while the painter lived in Paris, where the story is set. Yet, Sorodin's family all show up at his funeral for appearance sake and expect to close his estate quickly since he left no will.

This is why Sebastien's revelation of the contents of the letter is a welcome twist and a final stab from the painter whose family's absence and greed did not escape him. The letter brings into question the real genius behind his body of work, and with impeccable timing, people from the painter's past appear making claims, and demands, of their own.

This includes the fiery Russian vixen, Anya, played amazingly by Renee Cullen and the Southern-turned-European belle, Cherry May, played hilariously by Esther Boles.



As people arrive, the funnier and more intense the plot gets and the more frantic the Sorodins become, but not Sebastien. Even when reporter Clinton Preminger Jr. (Youness Tahiri) shows up, it doesn't phase him and he's always composed, like he has something up his sleeve.

But with all the uncertainty and betrayal, it begs the question of what is the truth, and is this all an elaborate plan orchestrated by Sebastien for money? And will their late husband and father's secrets obliterate their inheritance and change the art world forever?

This show isn't a fast-paced one, but rather a dialogue-filled show with a particular, witty and cheeky type of humour. And for those who think the "art" world is a strange place, and are confused about what makes one artist's work "valuable" while others remain unknown, this show opens this debate in a hilarious and revealing way.

Nude with Violin is the perfect mix of uniquely wacky characters and the snobby Sorodins. Tahiri is great as the eager, green reporter and St-Onge Richards' portrayal of daughter Jane is spirited and interesting, a great contrast to Karek's portrayal of the pompous brother, Colin.

DeWalt gives an amazing performance as Sebastien, playing him equal parts humourous and deceptive. Much of the laughter comes from his character's mannerisms, delivery and many languages and accents he conjures up at a moment's notice.

This show is a unique game of wits and deception, beautifully executed by the actors who bring this funny and strange tale to life.

Nude with Violin runs until March 8 at 8 p.m. at The Papermill Theatre, Todmorden Mills, 67 Pottery Rd. Tickets are \$22 and can be purchased by calling the box office at 416-425-0917 or by visiting [www.eastsideplayers.ca](http://www.eastsideplayers.ca)