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# 'Risk Everything' is a safe bet

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Dave Curry and Ann Russell in Risk Everything  
*Futoshi Sakauchi*

## **Risk Everything by George F. Walker produced by Whirligig Theatre Company**

Rating: ★★★★★

To Canadians, award winning playwright George F. Walker is something of a national treasure, though many Europeans are still unaware of his name. Prolific, with over thirty produced plays, in 1997 Walker wrote six plays gathered under the umbrella "Suburban Motel," all of which take place in the same hotel room. In July 2015, Whirligig Theatre Company gave one of these six, "Risk Everything," its European premiere at The New Theatre to sold out houses and huge acclaim. Now "Risk Everything" returns to The Viking Theatre due to popular demand.

From a certain perspective you could be forgiven for wondering what all the fuss is about when it comes to Walker. "Risk Everything" isn't intellectually taxing, doesn't deal with big issues and doesn't push the boundaries of theatre or text in any serious way. But "Risk Everything" isn't about

enlightenment, it's all about entertainment. And in this regard it has all the right ingredients, including robbery, gambling, deception, sex, lies, violence, bombs, beatings, porn kings and even more sex. A play with two strong female leads suffering the joys and pains of two incompetent but well intentioned men, "Risk Everything" flips the gender roles and offers a rollicking rollercoaster ride that's part mother and daughter story, part comedy crime caper, and all laughs

In "Risk Everything" Carol, an opportunistic gambler, is looking for one last opportunity to score big. A disaster as a mother and as a gambler, Carol calls her daughter Denise to come fetch her from the hospital emergency room. The long suffering Denise, along with her somewhat dim witted husband R.J., find no good deed goes unpunished when Carol reveals her reason for being at the hospital. When Carol's latest flame, the porn movie director, Michael, makes his appearance, matters between mother and daughter reach breaking point as old secrets are dragged up, new lies emerge and things begin to deteriorate rapidly.

Director Liam Halligan plays it large and for laughs, happy enough to side step nuance in favour of leaning towards the hilarious. Around him he's assembled a stellar ensemble who deliver some first rate performances. Dave Curry is compelling as R.J., a former inmate turned TV devotee who loves reality shows, hates comedy shows since the 1980's and will do anything to win the approval of the women who govern his life. Teri FitzGerald as the put upon, controlling and exasperated Denise, a woman with a past and a mother she is trying to move on from, gives a remarkable performance as she becomes mother to Carol's childishness, with her frustration and stress and tight jawed conviction all shining through. Pat Nolan as Carol's boyfriend Michael is a sheer delight as a crude, lewd, lovable dude who will do anything for his lady love. Ann Russell as the conniving Carol, a mistress of manipulation and the dynamite at the heart of it all gives a powerhouse performance, driving everything forward, always on the move with either a look or a gesture as she calculates the odds, her mind spinning like a roulette wheel, not really looking for the win, but for the thrill of the next play just so she can feel alive.

"Risk Everything" isn't likely to refashion the face of theatre. It's an unapologetic cartoon crime caper, a roller coaster ride that's fast, furious and laugh out loud funny, built around four first class performances. Stupendous good fun, it's well worth stepping into the shade for.

"Risk Everything" by George F. Walker, produced by Whirligig Theatre Company runs at The Viking Theatre until June 11th

Show begins 8.00 p.m.

Tickets €12.00

For further information, visit [The Viking Theatre](#) or [Whirligig Theatre Company](#)



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