



Roday and Weston in 'Extinction' Intimate theater at its best

November 24, 9:36 AM · LA Theater Examiner · Candyce Columbus

James Roday and **Michael Weston** are compelling in the world premiere of *Extinction* which represents intimate theater at its edgy best. Intense humor and pathos are at the center of this behind closed doors glimpse into the world of two male friends and the conflict that results when one of them tries to mature. **Directed by Wayne Wasserman and penned by Gabe McKinley** the well-written show **opened** to an appreciative audience on **Saturday, November 21**.

The contained story evolves in an Atlantic City hotel where Max and Finn meet for one of their semi-regular weekends of debauchery.

In a role 180 degrees from wise-cracking and self-assured Shawn Spencer in *Psych*, Roday portrays a subdued and uncertain Finn who struggles to maintain the positive changes he's made in his life. This role gives Roday the opportunity to exercise different acting chops and he takes excellent advantage of it.



PHOTO BY KURT BOETCHER

L to R: Amanda Detmer, Michael Weston, James Roday, Stefanie E. Frame

As the bad party boy Max, seemingly without a conscience, Weston gave an energetic and fascinating performance, ultimately revealing both cruel and wounded aspects of his personality.

Growing up is hard to do and the dynamic of their friendship makes it even harder. Max has depended upon Finn's maintaining the status quo and seems willing to go to any extreme to ensure it is maintained. Despite their intentions Finn falters and Max finds himself beginning to change.

One telling moment encapsulates the play's theme. Max jumps up and down on Finn's bed. Finn asks, "Who are you?" and Max answers, "I'm Peter Pan."

While Finn would like to check out a local museum exhibit, a far cry from their previous wild adventures, Max has other ideas and brings two "girls" up to their rooms. **Amanda Detmer** plays Missy, a woman who is willing to take advantage of the opportunity to earn a little extra cash. **Stefanie E. Frame** portrays her friend, Victoria, who is more reluctant but desperately needs money. Talented and lovely, they give performances that are convincing, adding interesting dimensions to the play.

Scenic Designer Kurt Boetcher did a remarkable job creating a workable and effective set on the small stage.

Definitely for mature audiences this show offers lovers of intimate theater many laughs and a riveting character study.

Extinction performs 8 p.m. Friday and Saturday and 7 p.m. Sunday through December 13. Tickets are \$18, \$15 students (with valid ID) and seniors. Call 323-960-7784 or visit www.plays411.com/Extinction. Elephant Space is located at 6322 Santa Monica Blvd. in Hollywood.