

CBC Manitoba Review

LOON

By Kelly Stifora

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5 STARS

LOON tells the story of Frances, a bereft and lovelorn cinema janitor so beaten down by life that his neck has literally disappeared, and a box of forgotten things that reawakens his childhood dreams and sends him on a word-defying adventure.

Indeed, to attempt describing it would be to deprive you of the pure magic that Andrew Phoenix and Kate Braidwood deliver in every moment of this (they earn the adjective) wonderful play.

On a sparse but ingenious set, and hidden behind a mask that is an exquisitely rendered piece of art on its own, Braidwood delivers a physical performance so virtuosic that at times you will swear Frances' expression changes. Add a soundtrack that mixes effects with familiar and original music to astonishing effect (at one point evoking an entire science fiction universe in a few deft strokes) and the result becomes something at once simple and profoundly emotional. It recalls the most enchanting work of animators like Cordell Barker, Pixar, or Sylvain Chomet (*The Triplets of Belleville*).

LOON is a live cartoon for lovers and for dreamers; that is, for everyone. I'd give it more than five stars - I'd give it the moon.