

Premier by local artist this weekend — don't miss!

The Bethlehem Gadfly Arts, the, Fun Stuff January 24, 2020

🌀 *Latest in a series of posts on the Arts in Bethlehem* 🌀

hear Gadfly read Walt Whitman

There's an original play premiering in Bethlehem this weekend.

Original.

Local talent.

Part of the IceHouse Tonight series.

Gadfly wants to begin to pay more attention in these pages to local arts and artists — the kinds of things that aren't heavily advertised or covered in the local press and want and deserve our support.

What should he cover? Let him know.

And who is able to post substantively (not just performance info) on such events?

Frankly, the IceHouse Tonight series has not been on Gadfly's radar. Maybe the same for many of you.

The Ice House is a beautiful venue, local treasure (and let's take a moment to remember the great Charlie Brown).

Original work by local artist — always beautiful too.

**“Jetblack Sunrise”
by Michael Fegely
8PM, Jan, 24-26
The Charles A. Brown Ice House
56 River St. (Sand Island)**

Kathy Lauer-Williams, “Original play based on Walt Whitman’s poetry opens at Ice House.” Morning Call, January 21, 2020.

Allentown’s Michael Fegely has long been fascinated with the poetry of American icon Walt Whitman. His 2016 one-man play “Whitman by Fire” was based on Whitman’s “Leaves of Grass.”

Now Fegely is premiering a new theatrical interpretation of Whitman’s work in “Jetblack Sunrise,” which comes to Bethlehem’s Ice House this weekend and to Easton’s Nurture Nature Center in February.

In Bethlehem, “Jetblack Sunrise” is part of the IceHouse Tonight series, and brings to life “the soaring, enigmatic work of America’s greatest poet.”

The intimate hour-long production is staged simply, and tells the story of a former soldier struggling to grasp his place in his country, his place among mankind, and ultimately his place in all of time.

The creators say they have developed a new way to communicate Whitman’s poetry to “unscrew the locks” and “embrace your soul” so that audiences embark on a brief odyssey of the mind — from the smallest blade of grass to the reaches of the cosmos — along the way finding their shared humanity, and awakening our familiar self in its immortality.

Fegely stresses that the performance is not a poetry reading of Whitman’s work. However, every line and word is drawn from an 1855 first edition of the poet’s “Leaves of Grass” and the 1856 poem “Song of the Open Road.” The title comes from a line in “Song of Myself,” one of the poems in “Leaves of Grass.”

Fegely and Amenda used lines and passages from the poetry to create an original active through-line that is brought to life on stage, while remaining absolutely true to the poet’s grand thoughts. They say in this way the audience “shares in the revelation of his vision as it is brought into the present to live among us.”