

## arts & entertainment news

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BERLIN

## It's Now Or Never, Pedestrians: German Town Has Elvis Lights

The central German town where Elvis Presley was stationed as a U.S. soldier in the 1950s has installed three pedestrian lights with images of the American rock icon. The red shows an image of the singer striking a pose at a microphone and the green depicts his trademarked hip swivel dance. They went online this week in the town of Friedberg, where Elvis was stationed from October 1958 to March 1960.

— The Associated Press

## Backstage Pass

INSIGHTS ON STAGE, SCREEN AND BEYOND

### ‘Stop Kiss’ Eloquently Delivers Powerful Story



#### THEATER REVIEW

By Kristen Fiore, Daily Sun

Thursday night I found myself seated before a big open apartment with magazines scattered on the floor, CDs on the coffee table, unfolded laundry in a heap on the couch and empty beer bottles and take-out boxes in the kitchen.

This was the set for “Stop Kiss,” the second show in season 3 at The Studio Theatre Tierra del Sol.

We meet Callie, the owner of the messy apartment, and as soon as she steps through the door, the show comes alive.

You can totally see her living there, putting a new CD in her stereo and using her landline phone as a microphone while she

dances around the living room.

Diana Son's “Stop Kiss,” is set in 1990s New York and focuses on Sara and Callie, who meet for the first time at the beginning of the show through a friend of a friend.

Callie (played by Mary Ellen Moreno) has been living in the apartment that she shared with her ex-boyfriend for years, working as a traffic reporter and going out with college friends in her spare time.

Sara (played by Sarah French) is a St. Louis transplant who came to New York hoping for a fresh start after winning a fellowship to teach third grade at an elementary school in The Bronx.

Though awkward at first, Sara and Callie naturally click and soon become close friends. Callie learns that Sara likes to sleep with her feet out of the blankets and Sara is fascinated by how Callie keeps a magic 8-ball in the drawer of her coffee table.

Only problem is, the magic 8-ball is even more indecisive than Callie. It's always stuck between two answers, which becomes a metaphor for their



Submitted photo

“Stop Kiss,” the second play of Season 3 at The Studio Theatre Tierra del Sol, is open now until Dec. 30.

relationship — stuck between platonic and romantic.

The audience gets to witness how things get more confusing as the two grow closer and closer, but the gray area is cute and comedic.

It becomes evident that while Callie will swerve out of the way to avoid trouble, Sara is fearless and faces things head on.

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## arts &amp; entertainment news

## CELEBRITY SPOTLIGHT



## CARDI B

Less than 24 hours after announcing her split from her husband, the rapper was spotted partying Wednesday at a nightclub to kick off Miami's Art Basel. The prestigious art fair officially opened Thursday.



## SEAN PENN

A Turkish official says Sean Penn is in Turkey working on a documentary about the slaying of journalist Jamal Khashoggi at the Saudi consulate in Istanbul.



## JULIA ROBERTS

Julia Roberts' motherly instincts play a big part of her latest film, "Ben Is Back." Written and directed by Peter Hedges, "Ben Is Back" is about a son home from rehab for Christmas.

## NEW YORK

## Dick Cheney Biopic 'Vice' Tops Golden Globes Nominations

Adam McKay's Dick Cheney biopic "Vice" staged an awards-season coup Thursday, landing a leading six nominations from the 76th annual Golden Globe Awards. For the first time, the Globes nominated three films directed by African-American filmmakers for best picture, drama: Ryan Coogler's "Black Panther," Spike Lee's "BlacKkKlansman" and Barry Jenkins' "If Beale Street Could Talk."

— The Associated Press



Submitted photo

"Stop Kiss" is told non-linearly between past and future, and as a result, the audience is wrrenched from the joyful, fluttery feeling of new love to the sorrow and outrage only a hate crime can bring about. "Stop Kiss" will run at The Studio Theatre until Dec. 30.

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This, too, becomes a theme when the second plot is introduced, the one where Sara and Callie are brutally attacked by a man who sees them kissing after coming out of a bar in the middle of the night.

"Stop Kiss" is told non-linearly between past and future, and as a result, the audience is wrrenched from the joyful fluttery feeling of new love to the sorrow and outrage only a hate crime can bring about.

While the focus is on Sara and Callie, the set has just as big of a role.

It is the largest and most complex set The Studio Theatre has had yet, according to scenic designer Kenneth Constant.

And the cityscape painted on the walls of Callie's apartment? 54 colors.

But the set isn't just an apartment. Scrim, a type of screen that can be projected on or see-through with the right lighting showed other spaces in the story as the scenes switched from plot to plot.

Moreno and French have a natural chemistry onstage that

allows them to tell the story incredibly well.

While they delivered their lines flawlessly, they also were able to communicate the things that weren't spoken: the excitement, the awkwardness, the tension.

And that is great acting. "The passion and the commitment to the characters and the delivery just brought the whole storyline together," said Village of Orange Blossom Gardens resident Cherie Stubbs after the show. "It's such a different perspective for our community, but in a stellar, positive, loving way."

"Stop Kiss" exhibits the pressures, dangers and disrespect that members of the LGBTQ community face every day, but it also shows the humanity and wholesomeness in same-sex love.

"Stop Kiss" will run at The Studio Theatre until Dec. 30. Get tickets online at thevillagesmedia.com or at any Villages Box Office location while you still can.

Kristen Fiore is a senior staff writer with The Villages Daily Sun. She can be reached at 352-753-1119, ext. 5270, or kristen.fiore@thevillagesmedia.com.

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