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From top left moving clockwise: Meg Arbo, Ralph Prentice Daniel, Janine Papin and Mark Edward Smith star in "Jim Reaper."

Studio Now Streaming Newest Snack-Size Play

'Jim Reaper' is available to stream for free on Facebook, YouTube and TheSharonStudio.com.

By LIZ COUGHLIN
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Though the Grim Reaper can elicit dread, "Jim Reaper" may be a different story.

The Studio Theatre Tierra del Sol offers a unique take on the afterlife in the newest Snack-Size Play, now streaming for free on Facebook, YouTube and TheSharonStudio.com.

Ralph Prentice Daniel, Meg Arbo, Mark Edward Smith and Janine Papin star in The Studio's rendition of Tracey Jane's dark comedy about party guests who find themselves in the presence of "Jim Reaper."

Director Danielle Paccione brought a vintage flair to the play which opened with silent-movie-style credits and title cards.

The opening scene, "At the

Soiree," found characters Blanche and Jim in the middle of some flirtatious conversation at a party, in which Jim takes an interest in Blanche's hang-gilding endeavors.

The dialogue included some cheeky foreshadowing throughout.

"It's something I've always wanted to do before I, you know," said Blanche with a gesture of a hand to her throat.

Doris, another party guest, enters with more information about their host, Jim, whom she deems "bad news."

"Jim is a very likable, charming man. He had a job to do, but has empathy," said Daniel of his character. "I think people will like Jim and question, 'Why should I like the badguy?'"

As the plot thickens, we also learn about Bob, who wants to tie up loose ends in his life, and Blanche, whose hang-gilding venture didn't go quite as smoothly as she had thought.

Jim allows Bob and Blanche to play a game of cards to decide their fate.

The play treats the underlying dark theme with some humor.

Happily checking off bucket-list items as she goes (try an exotic drink, play a high-stakes card game), Blanche isn't too affected by her proximity

to Jim.

"I think she's relatable, at least to women," Arbo said of her character. "She struck me as someone who had basically put her needs and wants on the back burner her entire life until she got divorced."

Suspense builds until we learn the fate of the guests, and the story leaves us with some pleasant surprises.

"I thought it was a fresh, updated way of showing the life after death trope - do we get a chance to bargain with death, is

there something beyond," Arbo said. "It was done in an updated way which I appreciated."

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