



[Circle Mirror Transformation](#) at HOME

By Annie Baker, Directed by Bijan Sheibani

Reviewed by [Johanna Hassouna-Smith](#) , March 2018

HOME is currently presenting Annie Baker's Pulitzer Prize winning masterpiece of modern naturalism, Circle Mirror Transformation. Set in a community Centre in Vermont, the play centres around five characters who undertake a 6 week series of Drama classes and features an all-star cast of television and stage performers.

Director Bijan Sheibani has a prolific list of previous productions including The National Theatre and the Young Vic, so it comes as no surprise that this production holds such artistic acclaim.

With such beautifully executed dialogue, characterisation and relationships, it is no wonder that Walter Meierjohann, the artistic director of HOME, described writer Annie Baker as ‘the Chekhov of our times’. Her writing is stunning and brings us a purist form of modern day naturalism. However, with Chekhov we see a world which we are separated from in both class and era, but with contemporary work such as this, we really do feel we are watching through that fourth wall. She writes so delicately about these characters and transforms what we understand about them through barely perceptible shifts in their interactions.

The framing device of a drama class allows for much of our discovery to emerge through drama exercises that border on being group-therapy. Whilst you learn about their pain, suffering and anxieties, it never feels self-obsessed because their angst is revealed through the characters’ attempts to improvise scenes.



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