

THE Examiner NEWS

Palminteri Directs Comedian Peter Fogel in New One-Man Show

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News

Comedian Peter Fogel in a scene from his new one-man show, "Til Death Do Us Part... You First!" The show, which can be seen Off-Broadway this weekend and at the Bedford Playhouse on Nov. 17, is directed by Oscar-nomination actor and Emmy Award winner Chazz Palminteri.

Peter Fogel has been a successful working comedian and comedic actor for decades, so it's difficult to get the Long Island-raised comedian starstruck.



After all, he has toured throughout North America, is a veteran of countless radio and television commercials and has appeared on late-night comedy shows on HBO and Comedy Central.

Just before the onset of the pandemic, Fogel was debuting a new one-man comedy show he wrote, "Til Death Do Us Part...You First!" in Florida. Despite his own impressive list of career credits, he was taken aback at what happened after his performance.

In the crowd that night was Oscar-nominated actor, writer and director and Emmy Award-winner Chazz Palminteri, who happened to be in town on business. Fogel never met Palminteri, a Bedford resident, but they have a mutual friend, who recommended taking in the show. Afterward, Palminteri offered to direct him as well as be the voice of Fogel's conscience in the show.

"My eyes lit up. Time stood still," Fogel recalled. "I'm going to have Chazz Palminteri direct my show. But every dog has its day. Maybe the dog had its day that day."

The show, based on true events in Fogel's life, is about an eternal bachelor who has difficulty making a commitment in his relationships. One love of his life dumps him on Valentine's Day, which actually happened to the now 59-year-old Fogel, about 30 years ago.

Director Chazz Palminteri on stage with comedian Peter Fogel for the one-man show "Til Death Do Us Part...You First!"

"She wanted to know my intentions with her. Were we going to get married," he said. "I was not ready. It was a funky time."

Fogel slips in and out of about 15 characters during the roughly 85-minute show, hilariously weaving in different voices.

The project had to be put on hold because of the pandemic, but "Til Death Do us Part...You First!" makes its Off-Broadway debut this weekend at the Triad Theater in Manhattan for three performances before coming to the Bedford Playhouse next Thursday evening, Nov. 17. The hope is to take it on the road after that.

The offer from Palminteri and his participation was a big deal because not only because of his name recognition, but because he has directed only three shows in the past 30 years.

Palminteri said he came unannounced to the show in Florida nearly three years ago and sat toward the back of the theater. He said he was "blown away" at how funny Fogel was and was also impressed with his writing, the pace of the show and how it resonated with the audience. It's about what nearly everyone goes through in life – the absurdities of love, relationships and marriage.

“I was so impressed with the solo show’s potential that I met Peter later in the lobby,” Palminteri said. “Right there, on the spot, I offered to take his play on to the next level and get it ready for Off-Broadway and beyond.”

“He saw the crowd, the laughter, the couples elbowing each other,” Fogel recalled. “He thought I had something, just like Robert DeNiro discovered him 34 years ago doing ‘A Bronx Tale’ in a small theater in L.A., and he always felt like he wants to give back when the right property comes along.”

Palminteri’s voice, as Fogel’s conscience, tries to guide the character to make the right choices in life.

“It takes a lot to impress me,” Palminteri said. “But when I saw Peter’s gift for mimicry, voices, dialects and how he moved effortlessly between 15 characters, I knew this was a show that deserved a larger audience.”

Fogel said a lot of his problems with relationships stemmed from being on the road and his partners not wanting to have that lifestyle. He admitted he grew up in a bit of a dysfunctional household.

“I’m a middle-aged man trying to figure it out,” Fogel said. “I’m a man-child at my age. There’s no difference in my mind than I was at 35. A man my age is a grandfather. Do you understand that? Does that make sense? I have friends that are grandparents. I have a friend that’s 76 and he’s never been married and we’re like the same guy. We look at things through a different lens.”

The three shows at the Triad Theater are this Friday at 7 p.m. and Saturday at 2 and 9:30 p.m. Tickets are \$35 to \$50 each. For tickets and more information, visit www.triadnyc.com. The theater is located at 158 W. 72nd St.

The Bedford Playhouse performance on Nov. 17 at 8 p.m. is produced by Palminteri’s wife, Gianna. Regular tickets are \$45 and \$60 for premium for non-members. For tickets, visit www.bedfordplayhouse.org.



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Martin has more than 30 years experience covering local news in Westchester and Putnam counties, including a frequent focus on zoning and planning issues. He has been editor-in-chief of The Examiner since its inception in 2007. [Read more from Martin’s editor-author bio here.](#) Read Martin’s archived work here: <https://www.theexaminernews.com/author/martin-wilbur2007/>