



“Strange window-wide glimpses into the worlds of less than functional characters of disparate, yet similarly odd situations are the rule of play here. These unique creations, well acted by a team of heartily entrenched performers, are brief, yet meaty introductions to moments within lives unraveling. We meet, in neat order, the mother of a killed veteran, walking amongst the corpses; a teenage girl and her adult lover, ripe with murderous designs; a desperate, perhaps cruel, and soon to be gone step-father; and a sad, masochistic prostitute... *Broken Boughs* is impressively diverse and deceptively insightful.”

Kessa DeSantis – Electronic Link Journey

“Looking at Jonathan Spiegel’s artwork of the stage walls of the Blue Heron Arts Center, you might think you know exactly what sort of a rough time you’re in for during Clay McLeod Chapman’s *Broken Boughs*, a play in four acts. Spiegel’s grouped figures are tortured and rotting, with contorted faces and bodies. The play’s subtitle, “there are no illegitimate children, only illegitimate parents,” promises an evening of, at best, parents and children tormenting each other with varying levels of glee. But you’d be wrong, and you’re glad to be wrong....

The last act, *milking cherry*, is the best, powered by an amazing performance by Patricia Randell. Randell is incandescent – even her skin and the pale stuff of her slip seem to glow – both tough and vulnerable but not yet broken as she relates the story in a husky Southern voice and bitter humor. Only at the end does she break, just a bit, and it’s breathtaking. Randell’s simply brilliant, and so is Chapman, who in these plays has done something new on the eons old subject of fractured family life... *Broken Boughs* was directed skillfully by Charles Loffredo.”

Arlene McKanic – Greenwich Village Gazette

“There are some moving moments and strong performances by the stellar five-person cast. *duct tape to family time* (featuring standout Hanna Cheek) starts with just two actors, two chairs and a bed, which through the power of words and delivery quickly become five people — the other three aren't on stage but you can practically see them just the same with a crispness that stimulates the imagination...

*milking cherry*, measures up in this respect. It's the story of an aging New Orleans prostitute — getting a little used up, maybe, and never able to compete with the sexier gals for the best dates — who now eagerly offers her body for men to cut with a knife instead of merely using her

sexually. Here is a bizarre premise indeed — a fetish seemingly too twisted to be true, yet symbolically very real. Patricia Randell gets the full theatrical intensity from this short play about the used, scarred and discarded woman and the experience that first set her on this path.”

Joshua Tanzer - OffOffOff.com