A SHOOTING. A SEANCE. FONDUE.

When her mother commits a shockingly violent act, 20-year-old Emily’s life is turned upside down. She leaves school, takes a job at a fondue restaurant, consults a medium, and, like the good student she’s always been, searches for answers. But nobody seems to be able to see her any more except through the lens of her mother’s crime. Could she possibly snap someday and follow in her mother’s footsteps? What can she do to deal with the pain she feels? Does she deserve happiness? How can she go on? And will things ever get better?

BETTER, Michelle Carter’s latest comic masterpiece, premieres this week at Catskill’s Bridge Street Theatre and continues performances through September 22nd. Carter’s HOW TO PRAY was a major critical and audience hit during BST’s 2017 Season. Steve Barnes at the Times Union said it had “the quick-cut feel of a smart pay-cable comedy, one that trusts the audience to grow with the characters. The questions asked in HOW TO PRAY are ultimate and profound, but the play handles them gently, showcasing different points of view rather than forcing confrontation. It’s a warm inquiry into human foibles, frailty, and fulfillment.” Amy Durant at The Alt called it “both heart-wrenching and hilarious … New and fresh throughout – some of the scenes hit home in such a way that it makes you a bit uncomfortable (which is the way you know a playwright’s words are doing their job) and some other scenes were touching enough to bring tears to your eyes.” And J. Peter Bergman at Berkshire Bright Focus declared, “This play is a wow! One of the best ensemble shows of the season, its relatively short run deserves sold-out houses and nothing less.” This new play is cut very much from the same cloth. As a playwright, Michelle consistently takes on serious subjects (the aftermath of a school shooting, in this case) and deals with them in such a light-handed, humanizing way that it utterly disarms audience members, helps them let down their guards and open their hearts. Her characters are such quirky, charming, relate-able individuals, it’s impossible to imagine an audience not falling in love and truly caring how things will turn out for them.

This world premiere production is directed by Sara Lampert Hoover (BST’s “Frankie & Johnny in the Clair de Lune”), and features actors Montana Lampert Hoover as Emily, Brian Linden as Emily’s dad Ben, Lori Evans as Medium Molly (a down-to-earth clairvoyant), Carla Lewis-Ruig as Luisa (Emily’s boss at The Melting Pot Fondue Restaurant), and Eric Fleising as Emily’s science nerd boyfriend Michael. The production also features a delightful original musical score composed by Catskill’s Rodney Alan Greenblat! And as an added treat, the playwright will be in attendance at the September 12th preview and will participate in a Q&A session onstage following the performance. She’ll also be around to meet and chat with at the reception following the official opening night performance on Friday the 13th (with a full Harvest Moon outside).

BETTER is recommended for audiences ages 13+ and plays Thursdays through Saturdays at 7:30pm and Sundays at 2:00pm from September 12 – 22, 2019 on the Bridge Street Theatre Mainstage, located at 44 West Bridge Street, in Catskill, NY, just a block and a half west of Main Street across the Uncle Sam Bridge, which spans Catskill Creek. Eight performances only. General Admission is $25, Students 21 and under are only $10. Discounted advance tickets are available at [better.brownpapertickets.com](http://better.brownpapertickets.com) or by calling 800-838-3006. Tickets will also be sold at the door one half hour prior to each performance on a space available basis.

For those on a budget, “Pay What You Will” performances will be held on Thursday evening September 12th and Sunday afternoon September 15th (“Pay What You Will” tickets are available only at the door one half hour prior to those performances. Just show up, pay whatever you feel you can afford, and we’ll do everything we can to squeeze everybody in. For more information, visit the theatre online at BridgeSt.org/better/.

Don’t pass up the chance to be one of the first to experience this eye- and heart-opening new comedy in its world premiere!

Performance Calendar:

Bridge Street Theatre presents
The World Premiere of
BETTER
by Michelle Carter
with Montana Lampert Hoover\*, Carla Lewis\*, Brian Linden\*, Lori Evans, and Eric Fleising
Directed by Sara Lampert Hoover
Sets and Lighting by John Sowle
Costumes by Michelle Rogers
Original Score by Rodney Alan Greenblat
Sound by Carmen Borgia
Production Stage Manager: Joshua Martin
September 12 – 22, 2019
Bridge Street Theatre Mainstage
44 West Bridge Street, Catskill, NY

Thursday September 12 @ 7:30pm (“Pay What You Will” preview, with a Q&A with the playwright immediately following the performance)
Friday September 13 @ 7:30pm (Opening Night, with reception to follow)
Saturday September 14 @ 7:30pm
Sunday September 15 @ 2:00pm (“Pay What You Will” performance)
Thursday September 19 @ 7:30pm
Friday September 20 @ 7:30pm
Saturday September 21 @ 7:30pm
Sunday September 22 @ 2:00pm (Closing performance)

Tickets:
Advance tickets available at [http://better.brownpapertickets.com](http://better.brownpapertickets.com/) or by calling 800-838-3006
General Admission $22, $10 for students ages 21 and under
Tickets can also be purchased at the door prior to each performance (on a space available basis) for $25, $10 for Students ages 21 & under.
“Pay What You Will” tickets are available only on the day of performance and go on sale at the door one half hour before curtain time.