



Menu

[HOME](#) [2019 THEATER AWARDS](#) [REVIEWS](#) [FEATURES](#) [EVENT LISTINGS](#) [ABOUT US](#)

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Chauntice Green, Darrell Philip, Damon Rutledge, Ken Ivy and Stephanie Schulzin *The Wrong Kind of People*, The Robey Theatre Company at The Los Angeles Theatre Center. (Photo by Ian Foxx)

The Wrong Kind of People

Reviewed by [Julia Stier](#)

The Robey Theatre Company

Through December 8

The Robey Theatre Company presents the world premiere of George W. Corbin's comedy *The Wrong Kind of People* under the direction of C. Julian White. Set in 1942 in Los Angeles, the play introduces audiences to a young man named Theo on the wildest night of his life. <

A graduate of the USC law school, Theo (Ken Ivy) — who had been the only African American in his class — checks into The Guardian Hotel in order to study in solitude for the bar exam. However, that plan is quickly derailed by Fixit (Damon Rutledge), the cheery bellman who offers Theo an opportunity to make some easy money. When Theo agrees to let certain of Fixit's "co-workers" in through his bedroom window in exchange for \$2 (a nice sum at that time), he accidentally finds himself involved in

a series of schemes in which anything that can go wrong, does. Over the course of the night, Theo meets Judge Purdy (Darrell Philip), an abrasive drunk; Mrs. Purdy (Stephanie Shulz), the judge's promiscuous wife; Mex (Chauntice Green), a beautiful call girl; and Spider (Stephen Tyler Howell), a slick poker dealer.

Ivy plays a young, bright Theo, who quickly finds a sense of camaraderie with Rutledge's jovial and earnest Fixit. As Judge Purdy, Philip has to work a little harder to win the audience over, as his character lays the racism on thick upon his first entrance; later, however, he devolves into a somewhat childlike drunk, making him an easy and acceptable target of laughter. Shulz is delightful as Mrs. Purdy, an unapologetic wife with a slightly sordid past. Green as Mex is the perfect blend of sweet and street smart, and Howell has a commanding presence as Spider.

The play is a fun night, full of film noir–esque twists and turns. As the heightened circumstances get more and more ridiculous, the risk that Theo's bright future could fade increases.

What the show basically tells us is to never write someone off as being the “wrong kind of people” based on his or her occupation, income level, or skin color. We all have dreams, and everyone has the ability to figure out how to achieve them.

The Los Angeles Theatre Center, 514 S. Spring St., Downtown L.A.; Thurs.-Sat., 8 p.m.; Sun., 3 p.m.; through Dec. 8 (no show Nov. 28). www.theatc.org. Running time: one hour and 20 minutes with no intermission.



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The Great Leap >

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