

Play Dates

Green Beetle Productions at Theatre Asylum

Reviewed by Neal Weaver
FEBRUARY 10, 2011

Sam Wolfson's irreverent and loosely constructed play suggests that interpersonal/romantic relationships are as messy as "a blind man eating fondue." In Act 1, "Boy Meets Girl," he looks at love among the kindergarten set, drawing funny but unlikely parallels with adult behavior: napping together is the kid version of sleeping together, fear of cooties stands in for AIDS worries, and high roller Tim (Brian Monahan) wins the attention of girls by speeding around on his cool Big Wheel tricycle. Sam (Rob Nagle) is eager to ask Stacey (Elizabeth Bond) to be his girlfriend, but he's shy, and she must provide strenuous prompting. Their relationship plays itself out in a hilarious romantic pas de deux but comes to grief when he discovers she has been napping around with other boys.

In Act 2, "Dr. Love," Sam has grown up to be Dr. Love, the dispenser of tough-love romantic advice, but he's still carrying a torch for first love Stacey. Act 3, "Honeymoon Period," concerns what happens after marriage. Mike (Monahan) and Katie (Krystal Marshall) are a couple whose greatest intimacy has devolved into sharing the less-glamorous aspects of personal grooming and hygiene: She pops his pimples and squeezes his blackheads, while he clips her toenails and shaves her armpits. But they've been listening to Dr. Love. They want to recapture the romance of their earlier days, but this leads to contretemps, when she farts while he's going down on her. They encounter a couple (Nagle and Bond) who are enthusiastic advocates for giving up and giving in to marital doldrums, but undaunted they decide to spice up their relations with a threesome, and pick up a girl who turns out to be Stacey.

This racy but disenchanting comedy reaps plenty of laughs, including the slightly embarrassed laughter of recognition. Jennifer Chambers' direction is slick, deft, and precise, and Kurt Boetcher's sets are clever and amusing. Nagle and Bond are at their best as the love-struck toddlers, while Monahan and Marshall shine as the married couple who don't want to wind up as "one of those couples" who've given up on romance.

Presented by Green Beetle Productions at Theatre Asylum, 6320 Santa Monica Blvd., Hollywood. Jan. 29–Mar. 6. Thu.–Sat., 8 p.m.; Sun., 7 p.m. (323) 960-7784.
www.greenbeetleproductions.com.