



Play Dates Shares Insights

By **Mary Mallory** on February 2nd, 2011



Elizabeth Bond and Rob Nagle in "Play Dates" at Theatre Asylum.

Witty, charming, and spot-on in its hilarious depictions of romance, "Play Dates" smartly captures the angst and joys of modern relationships. Filled with zingy one-liners and excellent acting, the production provides touching insights along with the laughs.

"Play Dates" considers love in all its stages: innocent crushes, heartbreak, searching for that special someone, and keeping the spark alive in long term relationships – all with a dash of élan and delight. Playwright Sam Wolfson combines one-liners and wry observations to examine the difficult realities of communication and awkward silences in expressing love.

Director Jennifer Chambers brings a whimsical touch to the energetic proceedings, adding a touch of sweetness to the sometimes dark humor. She keeps things moving, mixing together dance, video, sight gags and hilarious stage business, but transitions between sections are occasionally awkward.

The cast is marvelous, with great timing and chemistry enhancing their sympathetic portrayals. They also demonstrated great adlibbing skills after a small light malfunction and in bantering dialogue with the audience. Rob Nagle steals the show with his deadpan portrayal of a wounded child and intense, over the top talk show host. Elizabeth Bond brings caustic bite to young Stacy and sexy playfulness to Brooke. Brian Monahan exhibits goofy charm and Krystal Marshall emits a glowing confidence.

The spare, elegant design work of the sets, costumes and music, along with the hilarious choreography, bring an ironic touch to the proceedings. Blending humor and insight into tasty confection, "Play Dates" is a delightful, entertaining evening at the theatre.