

'Love/Sick' takes to the stage

By Alex Perri
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The Brevard College Theatre Department showcased a range of BC talent this weekend, Thursday, Sept. 29 - Sunday, Oct. 2, with its production of "Love/Sick" by John Cariani. The play, directed by guest director Peter Savage, consisted of nine acts, each with a new set of characters struggling to make sense of the complicated state of their relationships.

Especially strong performances from senior Josh Goldstein, sophomore Sarah Haga, freshman Anthony Zuniga, and junior Thomas Cox in their multiple roles portrayed both humor and heartbreak with surprising nuance.

I had the pleasure of attending the Sunday matinee show at Morrison Playhouse, and quite enjoyed this sometimes bleak yet engagingly beautiful depiction of modern romance within the 90 minutes of my afternoon.

Upon walking into Morrison Playhouse the audience was greeted by a stage set to be within several aisles of a generic "supercenter." Each scene takes place at 7:30 so to suggest that the play is a snapshot of nine different relationships at the same point in time.

"Love/Sick" began and ended with a chance meeting in this supercenter, and the acts in between all made reference to the store in some way or another. The motif of the oversized, over commercialized box store was further carried out in the production by the set design.

Each scene came to life out of one of the physical aisles of the supercenter. For example, one scene taking place in the bedroom was constructed in between acts from the props on the "homegoods" aisle. This shuffling of sets from superstore to people's homes highlighted the notion of the commercialization of modern romance, and how it can sometimes cheapen the idea of love.

Other high points of the play include depictions of bizarre yet charming characters like a singing telegram man, a man who can't be "dazzled" by his boyfriend, or the husband who endures the world's worst prank by his wife. These moments of humor were often immediately followed by characters in profound moments of sadness, like the couple who find themselves contemplating marriage in their bathroom on their wedding day, or the woman "looking for herself" in her garage storage boxes after family life doesn't measure up to her expectations.

Perhaps the strongest moment of "Love/Sick" came in the concluding scene, "Destiny" where an ex-husband and wife literally run into each other in the superstore and discover both are dealing with yet another failed marriage. It strongly contrasts the opening scene "Obsessive Impulsive" where two people with a fictional

disease fall in love at first sight.

In "Destiny," Jake (Cox) asks the most poignant question of the night, "How come when two people meet and fall in love at first sight and it doesn't work out, how come no one calls that destiny?" This bitter realization for the characters in the final act, is punctuated by a reappearance of the first two people we met from the play as they make out all across the stage. These surprising moments of hope within sadness are what worked to make "Love/Sick" successful.

"Love/Sick" was a strong first production from the Brevard College Theatre, as it asked some deep and philosophical questions from its audience about love and relationships. In a playhouse filled with both college students and retirees alike, "Love/Sick" managed to get to the heart of some timeless conflicts concerning romance in a refreshing and modern way.



Photo courtesy of Alex Webster

Josh Goldstein and Lily Bartleson in the "Lunch and Dinner" act of "Love/Sick."