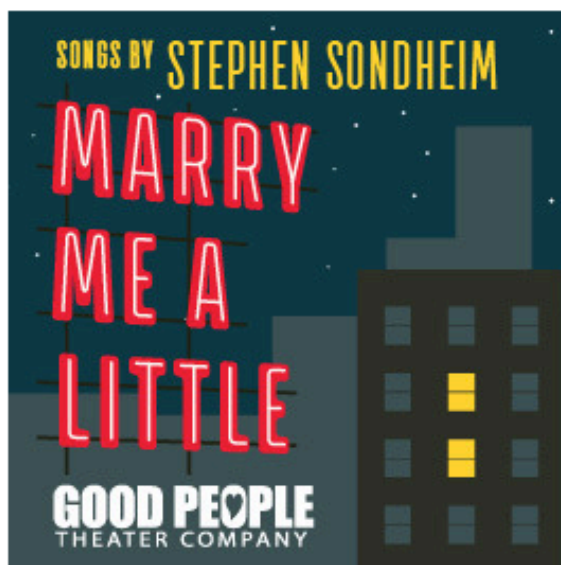




Los Angeles Theater Review: MARRY ME A LITTLE (Good People Theater Company at the Hollywood Fringe)

by TONY FRANKEL on JUNE 17, 2015
in THEATER-LOS ANGELES



MARRIED TO SONDHEIM

When I first saw *Marry Me A Little* in the mid-1980s, it was a revelation. But not because of the story. This revue uses trunk songs of Stephen Sondheim, songs which—at that time—were relatively unknown (many have since been performed in the show they came from (*Saturday Night*) or at any given cabaret and concert). Sondheim’s intelligence runs rampant throughout and the delectable selections are tough to beat. The context is simply two single folks on a Saturday night with nothing to do, so they drift about their rooms (which happen to be in the same building), conjuring up memories and fantasies.

Previous to seeing Janet Miller's terrifically satisfying production for Good People Theater Company, now playing at the Lillian Theatre as part of Hollywood Fringe, I saw four versions, including one in which the couple physically meets each other, and another with two gay men. Yet this rendition—strictly bare-bones for the Fringe—actually does justice to Sondheim's work better than any other revival I've seen. Jessie Withers and David Laffey are not just great vocalists who move surprisingly well—both being, as they say, big-boned—the actors understand that each song is like a monologue which must have the perfect balance of drama and showmanship. They do this remarkably well.

Miller's staging cleverly has the two singles moving about the same space even though they are in different residences. Once again, it proves you don't need a big budget to make material like this fly. Even though the two clamber on the bed with their shoes on or upstage themselves gazing out a window, this is a very graceful production. In addition, wily Music Director Corey Hirsch (on the synthesizer) often accompanies at a level of pianissimo; what a thrill to hear UNMIKED voices in a small theater once again—Sondheim writes tricky lyrics and you are guaranteed to hear every word. I am definitely married to this production.



photos by Rich Clark Photography

Marry Me A Little

part of The Hollywood Fringe Festival

Lillian Theatre / Theatre Asylum

1076 Lillian Way in Hollywood

ends on June 28, 2015

for tickets, visit www.GoodPeopleTheaterCo.org

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