

NEW REVIEW - GO PLAY DATES



Photo by Ed Krieger

Relationships would ride so much more smoothly if the elementary survey Will You Be My Girlfriend? Check "Yes" or "No," could be given/taken before every action. Do you want me to take out the trash right this minute? Will you be passive-aggressive if I have a quick drink with my friend, the one you hate? Do you have any intention of marrying and having children

with me? The trick, of course, is answering honestly and earnestly, and not putting like a kindergartener. In three short acts strung discreetly together, playwright Sam Wolfson takes a crack at love and relationships. The first, "Boy Meets Girl," is the sharpest of the trio. In their 48-hour romance, Stacey and Sam (Elizabeth Bond and a nicely understated Sam Nagle) connect over chitchat on the playground. "I'm a day trader," Sam says -- "in the lunchroom: Snowballs, Star Crunches -- desserts, mostly." The second act, "Dr. Love," is the weakest, mostly due to the now exhausted smart/shock-culture of both Dr. Drew and Howard Stern, on whom the title character seems to be based. Fortunately, it's short. Though the third, "Honeymoon Period," is a little too precious, if you've ever been long-coupled, the bedtime ritual that opens the act will be embarrassingly, hilariously familiar. "We were performing a scene from *Gorillas in the Mist!*" a horrified Katie (Kristin Lee Kelly) exclaims. Wolfson's dialogue is on par with the best sketch and sitcom writing, which means plenty of cozy pop culture references cushioning a Big Lesson. When the subject's love, no matter how much the ending resembles an episode of *Friends*, most audiences will relate. Kurt Boetcher's efficient set deserves mention, a very funny Brian Monahan rounds out the cast, and Jennifer Chambers directs. Green Beetle Productions, Elephant Space Theatre, 6322 Santa Monica Blvd., Hlywd.; Thurs.-Sun., 8 p.m.; through August 1. (323) 960-7776. (Rebecca Haithcoat)