

Critique by Nanci Lombardo

Two Hearts Over Easy

by Robert Cabell
Actors' Playhouse
100 Seventh Ave. South
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This is a feel-good musical for the straight suburban middle-aged crowd who wants an entertaining, non-threatening slice of West Village quaintness along with a well-structured and beautifully crafted musical score. No extreme wit; no cutting edge.

The story is about two best friends: a divorced middle-aged woman, played by Maggie Wirth, and a gay man in his mid-thirties, played by Bill Ebbsmeyer, who meet once a month for brunch to discuss their lives, loves, dreams and fantasies. She has a crush on the straight bartender and he on her, and they each sing songs of desire for one another. The waitress, played by Melanie Demetri, is funny, witty and a great sidekick for each character. She delivers some of the best lines in the show.

The drama lies in the present wishes and hurtful past of the two main characters. Jimmy's song to his lover who died of AIDS is beautiful, and "Mirror, Mirror on the Wall" is the most heartfelt and inspiring of all the numbers.

This musical, as a whole, offers delight in a charming way. There are no fast punches pulled, the music and lyrics are masterfully directed by Seth Osburn and choreographed by Marvin Gardens, and it is not what you'd call queer theater. I believe that unto itself, it serves a very entertaining view for the out-of-towner or suburbanite into the TV version of gay life in New York City. In other words, it's not *Angels in America* or *The Normal Heart*.

Perhaps on a Sunday after brunch, or if an out-of-town straight guest visits and wants a taste of good off-Broadway musical theatre, *Two Hearts Over Easy* will serve that purpose. —NL

