

LA RONDE DE LUNCH REVIEWS

BRYNN THAYER receives BEST OF 2009-2010 AWARD!

BEST PERFORMANCE BY A FEATURED ACTRESS in a Comedy from STAGE SCENE L.A.



STAGE SCENE L.A.: *Peter Lefcourt skewers Hollywood deal-making—brilliantly—in La Ronde De Lunch, the funniest show you’re likely to see this fall and one of the most terrifically performed comedies of this or any season.*

*Lefcourt, whose Hollywood satires include the novel *The Deal* and the Showtime series *Beggars And Choosers*, knows Tinseltown better than just about anyone else. Here he takes Arthur Schnitzler’s sexual roundelay *La Ronde* and turns it into a series of “Let’s do lunch” meetings in pursuit of that ever illusive DEAL. Actress lunches with Producer, who then lunches with Studio Exec, who then lunches with Agent, until *La Ronde* is complete and the deal of deals has been made.*

*Under Terri Hanauer’s inspired direction, the entire cast give colorful, memorable performances, making these not so sympathetic characters surprisingly likeable (though not perhaps if we had to deal with them in real life). As The Actress, Harrold is every bit as beautiful as she was playing Lauren Bacall in the 1980 TV movie *Bogie*, and a heck of an actress to boot. Producer Silver gets to throw a delicious tantrum—which he does, deliciously. Siegel is so movie star gorgeous that it’s a pleasant surprise to discover what a deft comedienne she is. Full-of-himself Agent Briggs’ imitation of the sound his Mercedes is making is almost worth the price of a ticket, as is the sight of him licking his upper lip in an attempt to seduce the Exec. (Briggs also gets quite possibly the biggest laugh ever from a much-told Celine Dion joke.) Hecht too is a hoot as The Realtor, who can’t help crying when recalling a scene from *The Writer*’s last movie, and whose excitement level builds steadily the closer she comes to acquiring *The Writer*’s house.*

*Thayer gets possibly the best of all ten roles as *The Writer*, becoming increasingly drunk as her two lunches progress, and she milks every possible laugh from her character’s heavy imbibing, so heavy in fact that a half-gallon bottle of Stoli is her “dressing on the side.” Thayer’s also got a great bit involving that bottle of Stoli, a small bottle of drinking water, and a lime or two. Strode is delectably perky as The Personal Fitness Consultant who can’t stop stretching even during lunch.*

*You don’t have to be an Hollywood insider to love *La Ronde De Lunch*, though there couldn’t be a better town for it to be staged in than this one. The show’s been extended up into December, and has the potential of being both a popular (and a cult) hit. You*

won't find a tastier treat in any L.A. theater between now and who-knows-when. Order your tickets before they sell out. Hollywood's going to be buzzing about La Ronde De Lunch. It probably is already. --Steven Stanley November 13, 2009



The Katselas Theatre Company at the Skylight Theatre Reviewed by Hoyt Hilsman

October 22, 2009

BACKSTAGE WEST: BACKSTAGE WEST CRITICS PICK!

Inspired by Arthur Schnitzler's sexual farce, writer Peter Lefcourt has fashioned a hilarious send-up of Hollywood mores and memes, performed by a sparkling cast under the deft direction of Terri Hanauer. Lefcourt has written scripts for Hollywood for more than 30 years, including "Eight Is Enough" and "Desperate Housewives," and apparently has the scars to show for it.

*Although farces about Tinseltown are tricky to pull off—they often quickly devolve into caricature and come with a heavy dose of anger from envious playwrights—Lefcourt's play avoids all those pitfalls. Lefcourt has obviously been swimming in these waters for years and knows the players intimately. Like most fine comedy, the play is based on truth; you can't make this stuff up. And the playwright adds another important ingredient to the mix: He maintains an odd affection for all his characters, as shallow and superficial and narcissistic as they may be. Hanauer does a bang-up job of directing here, **letting loose a stellar cast of actors to perform at their creative best, while still holding a firm rein over the tone of the piece.** Her use of imaginative props, music, choreography (Tracy Silver), and costumes (Shon Le Blanc) add immeasurably to the evening.*

The cast is outstanding. Huguley is picture perfect as the narcissistic star, Briggs is a hyperactive wonder as the agent, Gubelmann shines as the bimbo with a 165 IQ, Hecht captures the essence of the Hollywood

*realtor, Siegel is marvelous as the mommy exec, Trebor is terrific as the lawyer, **Thayer nails the lesbian writer role**, Harrold is unforgettable as the aging diva, Silver is a suitably desperate producer, and Strode is perky perfection as the personal fitness consultant. The Bruces also feature several standouts—including Montgomery, Thomas, and a silver-throated Bowers.*

LARCHMONT CHRONICLE:

‘Le Ronde’ skews Hollywood in restaurant vignettes Theater

Review

by

Patricia Foster Rye

*Le Ronde de Lunch by Peter Lefcourt, billed as an homage to the 1900 farce Le Ronde by Arthur Schnitzler, is a skewer of tinsel town’s players and no one escapes Mr. Lefcourt’s deadly, rapier wit. The action takes place at El Pueblo de la Venezia, L.A.’s trendiest, most expensive restaurant where the players interact in a series of hilarious vignettes, at a table center stage, while the rest wait their turn in frozen positions as a scenic backdrop. All the regulars are represented: studio execs, actors, fitness trainers, bimbos, lawyers, Realtors, etc. The scene changes are handled by a Greek chorus of waiters—“Bruces 1 through 5” and their acappella/rap interludes, choreographed by Tracy Silver, become anticipated highlights. Director Terri Hanauer’s inventive and creative direction mines every visual laugh while keeping the character development on track. **The entire cast is superb especially: Brynn Thayer as The Writer, Fiona Gubelman as The Bimbo, Jay Huguley as Clive, the Superstar, and Clent Bowers as Bruce #5. For those of you who take this town too seriously, you mustn’t miss this delicious send up. 4 Stars *******

L.A. Weekly: GO!

CITYSPUR.COM: L.A.’S TOP TEN!