

“Adam and Eve on a Raft, Wreck, Em!”

They're not serving scrambled eggs on toast at this performance on a two-top. What they are serving is sizzling and spicy. The handbill for *Table for Two* was its only problem. I thought I was going to see a passionate tango around a little bistro set. However, the couple in the photo looked post-mortem. Well, you know about books and their covers, right?

Table for Two tells the story of love and devastating loss through a lean script, carefully procured music and a dazzling range of movement that sometimes threatens to scuff the ceiling. Ecstatic, uninhibited new love is expressed in goofy clowning and cheesy jazz moves. Deepening love and trust soars above the table in breathtaking romantic partnering. We get to know this adorable couple as they move in together. We can imagine their bridal registry as they set up housekeeping and fold laundry. So happy together, until they have so little left they have to use puppets to show the dried up remains of a once happy life.

Creator/Producer Flora Bare as Mrs. is an artist and an athlete. This actor/dancer/gymnast bares the beating heart of Mrs. through her every move. After the loss of love she stands in a shower in abject grief. As she washes, the memory of him is there, with her in the shower. They dance a sweet shadowing of each other until she realizes he's not really there. Bare is fearless not only physically but emotionally. She has tapped something deep to give to the character of Mrs. I felt a shudder of loss in a moment where Mr. and Mrs. are trying save their love. Bare attaches herself vertically across the body of Mr. She rolls over and over across his torso as they desperately grab and pull at each other trying to hold on. They hold on but it is just too difficult, their hearts are no longer in sync.

Christopher Gliege, plays Mr. He is also credited as helping to devise parts of this piece. Gliege brings sex appeal and strength to this complicated love story. He has a joyful and stormy magnetism that makes the ecstatic highs and lows of his partner's emotions understandable. He's so fun and cute, so “new boyfriend” at the beginning and then he turns into every woman's nightmare when he is irritable and distracted, punching a remote at the tv with his clenched fist. His partnering with Bare is solid. My attention was always on the story they were telling, not wondering whether she might come crashing to the floor. They show a deep trust as acting partners.

Co-Directors Scott Dare and Sean Garratt have given us a very tight, pulled together piece using the creators' disparate themes. We see the games lovers play and water as the symbol for everything in life. The couple showers, dances in the rain, and sail a tiny boat in a big stormy sea. Water replenishes their relationship and also wears it away until there's nothing left. Oh, and how about that game most of us have played? “Will you still love me if...?”

The show deserved a better space but Kai Magee made it work with lighting and spot-on music cues.

This piece is so much more than a breakfast order for a party of two shouted across a noisy diner. It had everything I could ask of a theatrical experience. I felt it all.

Table for Two was performed at the Ideastream Stage @ Miller Classroom on Saturday July 27, 2019. It was created by Flora Bare and written by Erin Austin.

Bonne Blair
July 28, 2019