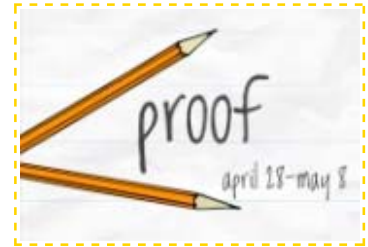


Cast Members
Brian Seibert

BRIAN W. SEIBERT
Hal
Deirdre MacNamara

Claire
Jake Lipman

JAKE LIPMAN
Catherine
Daryl Brown

Daryl Brown
Robert
Proof
Open: 04/28/10- Close: 05/08/10
Reviewed for TheaterOnline.com By: Heather Violanti


Tongue in Cheek Theatre's revival of PROOF is delicately nuanced, graced with fine performances and a clear-eyed dedication to the script. Director Kristen Kentner and the cast skillfully balance the rueful humor and pathos of David Auburn's script. The end result is a production as eloquently streamlined as the mysterious mathematical proof that drives the play.

Auburn's play, first seen at Manhattan Theatre Club in 2000, won the Pulitzer and Tony. The characters are richly drawn if overly familiar types that provide meaty roles for actors: depressed daughter, crazy-but-brilliant-professor, concerned-but-oblivious older sister, slacker academic/love interest. The current ensemble attack their roles with gusto. Jake Lipman finds both bitterness and compassion within Catherine, the daughter who gave up her own academic aspirations to nurse her ailing father, Robert, as he slowly slides into madness. Daryl Brown's subtle portrayal of Robert, meanwhile, eloquently captures the character's sly humor and bewilderment. Brian W. Seibert is effortlessly charming as Hal, Robert's protégée and Catherine's boyfriend. Deirdre MacNamara is pitch-perfect as Claire, Catherine's compassionate yet slightly self-involved older sister.

Director Kentner paces her performers well. She balances the comedy and tragedy with a deft hand. If anything, the production's most glaring flaw is its scenic design, or lack thereof. (No set designer is credited in the program). The entire action takes place on Catherine's front porch, but the scenic components here--a bench, bistro table and chairs, bamboo mat, and window frames--don't quite form a cohesive setting. The lackluster set contrasts sharply with the clever music and sound design by Philip Rothman, who has fashioned some memorable audio transitions between scenes (listen for the hilarious recorded performance by Hal's self-consciously awful band).

Minus a few glitches, this PROOF adds up to a memorable evening of theater.