

Tuesday, Jan. 20, 2009

Revue delivers dose of romantic reality

By PUNCH SHAW
Special to dfw.com

DALLAS — If it's perfect, should it be changed?

The lighthearted musical revue *I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change* is one of the most resounding successes in the history of North Texas theater.

The four-actor show, which takes a wry look at romantic relationships, had a legendary, three-year run at Theatre Too, the downstairs space at Theatre Three. Since that marathon ended in 2003, it has played an annual, limited return engagement in that space during the Valentine's season. It began this year's run in Theater Too on Monday.

"A woman came up to me and said that she had seen this production 16 times," says Terry Dobson, who has directed all the productions, beginning with the show's initial run upstairs on Theatre Three's main stage in 2000 through the current one. "We call it our cash cow.

"It brought in over a \$1 million in single ticket sales over that three-year run," continues Dobson, adding that the subsequent revivals have continued to average about \$10,000 a week in single ticket sales.

All of this was achieved with a cast that hardly changed — until now. This production will offer a cast that is 75 percent new. Only Lindsey Holloway, who was in last year's run, has done this show at Theatre Too before.

"It's been a real joy" working with the new cast, says Dobson, the musical director at Theatre Three, who also plays piano and does arrangements for the Turtle Creek Chorale.

Not there was anything wrong with the previous cast (please see financial figures above).

"But I was getting very tired of the show," admits Dobson, and that may have been the reason that Theatre Three executive producer-director Jac Alder decided that "we needed to freshen it."

So now Holloway will be joined by Bradley Campbell, Gary Floyd and Lisa J. Miller in the musical comedy's nameless roles (they are billed only as Man No. 1, Woman No. 1, etc., because all of them play several characters in the show's segmented format).

Dobson's track record with this show would be enough to create an aura of optimism around the newest production. But, in addition to that, Theatre Too is not the only house to have found success with this revue. It has enjoyed more than 150 productions around the world, grossing more than \$60 million along the way.

So why has this show, written by Joe DiPietro and Jimmy Roberts, done so well?

"I think it is the reality of it," says Dobson about the off-Broadway hit. "They [audience members] are able to see themselves in one part or another."

I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change

Through Feb. 15
Theatre Too

2800 Routh St.

7:30 p.m. Thursdays; 8 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays; and 2:30 p.m. Sundays

\$30-\$35

214-871-3300, option 1; www.theatre3dallas.com

There will two be performances Feb. 14 (2:30 and 8 p.m.) with a champagne intermission. Tickets for those performances are \$50 each.