

Bursting with fun

THEATER REVIEW: Theatre Three's 'Big Bang' delivers on humor, century by century

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By [LAWSON TAITTE](#) / Theater Critic

By the end of *The Big Bang*, it's hard to tell who's more exhausted – the two actors from 80 minutes of nonstop singing and acting silly or the audience from constant laughter of the same duration.



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BEN SKLAR/DMN

Gary Floyd (left) and K. Doug Miller don't really operate in the same style in *The Big Bang*, but they make a great team. The production continues through April 15 at Theatre Too! in the Quadrangle.

This tiny musical tackles a big subject: the entire history of the universe. Technically, it's a musical within a musical. The two characters are supposedly the authors, Jed Feuer and Boyd Graham, performing excerpts of a much, much larger piece for a backers' audition in a surreptitiously borrowed apartment.

Theatre Three opened the show in its basement space on Monday. Terry Dobson, who has had so many successes in Theatre Too!, directed this one and is the onstage accompanist. He occasionally supplies a little dialogue as well, including a description of creation deliberately delivered as if Mr. Dobson could barely read.

Gary Floyd as Boyd enters in cargo pants, and K. Doug Miller enters as Jed in a tux (though without a tie). Soon, however, they have both stripped down to the bare minimum as Mr. Floyd plays Adam and Mr. Miller (with a handy ivy representing long tresses) plays Eve to sing a ditty with a calypso beat.

The two sail through the centuries. Mr. Floyd's Nefertiti is a diva with an attitude. Mr. Miller's Attila, a pot helmet on his head, warbles a saloon song in the style of Frank Sinatra. They team up as Columbus and Isabella, Napoleon and Josephine and as Pocahontas and Minnehaha assessing the men in a Manhattan bar with jaundiced looks (and with really bad puns).

Don't expect much relevance to the historical figures at issue. *The Big Bang* feels like a revue pulled from the lightweight musical comedies of the 1920s and '30s. The ideal cast would consist of Bert Lahr and Danny Kaye.

Neither Mr. Floyd nor Mr. Miller is that sort of performer. Both are singing actors rather than personality comics. To be sure, they wring a lot of laughs out of this material. But they probably sing the songs better than they were meant to be sung.

Some might object that the two really aren't operating in the same style. Mr. Floyd gets the biggest laughs out of the purest psychological realism, whereas Mr. Miller walks around in ironically wide-eyed wonder, pretending to be in a comic panic. They make a great team anyhow – whether dolled up in mop heads as a Chinese and a Japanese woman arguing their nation's superior qualities or singing the final "list" song, which sports the best of the show's variably witty lyrics.

Lots of people are going to love *The Big Bang*, but they'll probably be grateful they're only getting 80 minutes of it rather than the (fictional) 12-hour marathon from which these bits are supposedly excerpted. You can have too much of a good thing.

- Through April 15 at Theatre Too! in the Quadrangle, 2800 Routh St. Runs 80 mins. \$20 to \$30. 214-871-3300, www.theatre3dallas.com.