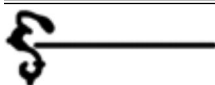


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# Minute Waltz

**"Six Dance Lessons..." is trifling, but Theatre Three's production is ready for competition.**

by *Mark Lowry*

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To master any type of social dance, we learn in Richard Alfieri's slight but entertaining play *Six Dance Lessons in Six Weeks*, "you have to know when to change the steps."

As a metaphor for life, that's not exactly profound nor original. Really, nothing in this play is. That doesn't mean it can't be thoroughly enjoyable, especially when given director Terry Dobson's first-rate treatment in Theatre Three's basement space, Theatre Too!

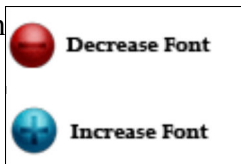
It starts with his ace cast of Elly Lindsay and Bob Hess, who elevate the Lycra-thin storyline, a classic romantic comedy formula. Boy and girl meet and don't take a shine to each other right away but eventually warm up. Despite their disagreements, they finally realize that their mutual love is greater than anything they could have hoped for. (Cue the "awwww.")

Except in this case, Lindsay plays an aging widow, Lily, and Hess is gay dance instructor



Elly Lindsay and Bob Hess. Photo by Ken Birdsell.

Michael, who is about a quarter-century her junior, will never physically consummate their relationship? The swing and cha-cha are a serviceable substitute, and more than what's afforded to most people in a Platonic bond.



'll never physically consummate their

Alfieri works too hard to sustain Lily and Mike's love/hate tango, but amid some of the belabored one-liners and forced retorts are a few words worthy of frequent re-quoting, such as Lily's "if you say your real age out loud, your face hears you." Michael's homosexuality and Lily's late husband, who was a Baptist minister, play prominently into these lite cat-fights, as does Lily's downstairs neighbor in her South Florida high-rise.

Rising high above the mediocre material is Lindsay, looking lovely in six different dresses themed to each dance (costumes are by Bruce R. Coleman) in the first six scenes and tied to a specific dance Michael is teaching Lily that week. The seventh "bonus" scene is just the right sentimental closer that the play needs.

Lindsay settles beautifully into her character, a woman who's not as uptight as she appears. And, oh, can that girl foxtrot! She impresses in the dancing department (the choreography is by Michael Serrecchia).

Hess' role is more on the caricature side, but hello, Michael is a former Broadway chorus boy who now teaches dance. Hess is just the right amount of over-the-top, the kind of guy who's always "on" even when there's no one around to witness the show.

The production looks great, too. Theatre Too! is an odd performance space, with a thrust stage that stretches out like a runway, with most of the audience on the long side. Jeffrey Schmidt's set believably transports the below-ground audience to a high-up beach condo, with patio doors beckoning to the ocean-and-sky view.

It's almost as if you step off the balcony and do a little jig on cloud nine.

## Six Dance Lessons in Six Weeks

by *Richard Alfieri*  
Presented By *Theatre Three*

August 31 - September 20  
at **Theatre Three (Theater Too!)**

2800 Routh St.  
Dallas, TX 75219  
214-871-3300  
\$25-\$30

7:30pm Thursday; 8pm Friday; 2:30 & 8pm Saturday;  
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