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Theater review: Theatre Three's 'Songs from an Unmade Bed' is more than just music

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By LAWSON TAITTE / The Dallas Morning News

ltaitte@dallasnews.com

You would expect a show called *Songs from an Unmade Bed* to be about sex, loss and loneliness. You might not expect it to be seriously funny, as well.

Theatre Three opened the song cycle in its basement space on Monday. Mark Campbell wrote all the lyrics and sent them to 18 different composers. Each is represented in the score by a single number.

Terry Dobson, the show's director and music director, leads the three-person band from the keyboard. He decided to mix things up a bit dramatically. Instead of a single performer playing a gay man, Dobson has cast three actors. Sometimes they address each other, even touch each other – there's an especially naughty scene under the bed covers. This *Songs from an Unmade Bed* is theater, not just a recital.

Sometimes the current version seems to deal with a bisexual triangle. You can't really infer a coherent story line, though. I'm not sure even the original concept using a single singer could make the cycle feel completely unified. That's partly a function of the diverse styles of the individual pieces, not unexpected given the work's genesis.

For many audience members, the amusing songs will be the most memorable. There are a great many. "The Other Other Woman" by Jake Heggie (the [Dallas Opera's Moby-Dick](#)) is a refusal to play third fiddle. Jeffrey Stock's "He Plays the Cello" describes a boyfriend who's an amateurish amateur musician. Debra Barsha's "He Never Did That Before" comes from a man who wonders where his partner picked up a new sexual maneuver. The more lyrical numbers tend to the wistful.

The three performers are all superb. Patty [Breckenridge](#) and Gary Floyd are known quantities, two of Dallas' finest musical theater performers. Chris Wagley just moved here from New York with lots of theater and concert dates to his credit.

Songs from an Unmade Bed doesn't give us long enough samples of its various composers' work to help us tell them apart. Still, it's nice to know that so many are happy to turn out such breezy, witty stuff.

PLAN YOUR LIFE: Through Oct. 3 at Theatre Three in the Quadrangle, 2800 Routh St. Runs 60 mins. \$25 to \$30. 214-871-3300, www.theatre3dallas.com.