

Serving Atherton, East Palo Alto, Los Altos, Los Altos Hills, Menlo Park, Mountain View, Portola Valley, Stanford, Sunnyvale, Woodside

PALO ALTO DAILY NEWS

Powered by Topix.net

Apr 03, 2007

- [Local News / Home Page](#)
- [Region/State News](#)
- [World News](#)
- [Business News](#)
- [Sports - Professional](#)
- [Announcements](#)
- [Arts & Entertainment](#)
- [Columnists](#)
- [Death Notices](#)
- [Letters & Opinion](#)
- [Society](#)
- [Sports - Local](#)
- [Style](#)

[Local Classifieds](#)

Daily News Services

- [Contact Information](#)
- [Jobs at the Daily News](#)
- [Staff](#)
- [Report delivery problems](#)

Do you have a calendar item, brief or newstop? Please contact us.

Daily News Publications

- [Burlingame Daily News](#)
- [East Bay Daily News](#)
- [Los Gatos News](#)
- [Redwood City Daily News](#)
- [San Mateo Daily News](#)

Friday Mar 9

'Maybe Baby' lacks conviction

By **John Angell John / Theater Reviewer**

Spring is on the way, and poets turn to thoughts of love and romance. The bad side of love, however, is what you mostly get in the startlingly cynical and intimacy-phobic series of cabaret comedy skits about romance called "Maybe Baby, It's You," currently running at Dragon Theatre in downtown Palo Alto.



Photo by James Kasyan.
Noel Wood and Meredith Hagedorn play multiple roles in "Maybe Baby, It's You."

If you've ever been scared out of a romantic relationship, or been too afraid get into one in the first place, you'll recognize yourself in this series of a dozen or so two-person male/female comedy shorts.

The evening covers a range of situations, including personals ads, bar pickups, blind dating, shared fantasy romance, wedding receptions, conjugal discord and divorce.

The Palo Alto show features two of the Peninsula's best local actors, Noel Wood and Meredith Hagedorn. The original New York production was, in fact, performed by the two playwrights, Charlie Shanian and Shari Simpson, who are primarily actors who wrote the show as a vehicle for themselves as performers.

Simpson is a former actress with ACT in San Francisco, and Shanian is Tori Spelling's ex-husband. In truth, "Maybe Baby, It's You" is more a vehicle for actors than it is a literary effort. Our two local people do a good job with it.

In the evening's opener, a man and woman dating through personals ads slowly lower their expectations of what they will settle for. Their growing disappointment sets the tone for much of the evening, although "Maybe Baby's" recurring whine about relationship failure ultimately proves more banal than insightful.

One early segment about a woman who rejects an otherwise ideal man because he dances poorly, seems not to make sense in its own terms of romantic quest, until the play's ongoing sense of intimacy phobia in later scenes eventually explains why she might reject someone great.

In one of the show's strongest segments, a science geek junior-high girl runs her sharp wit over the various moronic adolescent boys in her class, until she meets a bright geek boy whose equally sharp wit challenges her fear, and wins her heart.

"Maybe Baby" is best in moments like this, when it becomes aware of its own bitterness, and that bitterness gets a comeuppance.

Another good segment is the Raymond Chandler-like spoof in which a hardboiled guy and dame meet in a bar. It contains some of the best writing, as two smart-aleck strangers flirt entertainingly, then marry and find their lives turn lousy, until they wake up to themselves.

Overall "Maybe Baby" feels like a play about people bubbling with hormones who conclude that they should be in relationships, but are afraid to commit, and as a result find a myriad of reasons to complain about why it isn't working out.

Another way to look at it is that these are the stories of people who don't like themselves very much, and who therefore struggle to like others.

In the Palo Alto production, director Bill Starr's odd selection of vanilla, greeting-card love poetry, played over the sound system during scene changes, contradicts the cynical tone of the play without making a comment on that contradiction dramatically. (Also, the sound quality of the recordings could have been better.)

In the end, "Maybe Baby, It's You" feels like a play about romance, written by people who are afraid of love. If you are afraid of intimacy, you will recognize yourself in these stories.

Rating: Two and a half stars

E-mail John Angell Grant at jagplays@dailynewsgroup.com.

Comment on this story

[Read 1 comment](#)

Type in your comments to post to the forum

Name	<input type="text"/>
Comments	<input style="height: 100px;" type="text"/>

Recent Comments

71 comments in
Tongans and Samoans : Where is the Love?
"You ever see HIGH CHIEFS from SAMOA looking for wives in Tonga? NOPE that's because we ..." — **Crazy SiCco**

1 comment in
Hunter rides high, fearless of the lows
"Hunter is one of the best in the rock history." — **Oeyvind**

2 comments in
Driving toward all-day parking
"The reality is that a downtown like PA's expects most of its daytime customers to come ..." — **eric**

3 comments in
Wine thief strikes Atherton home again
"whoa- how'd that happen?" — **eric**

[Start a discussion »](#)

[Ads by Goooooogle](#)

Real Estate Palo Alto CA
Local Real Estate to Buy and Sell Map Search Property by Town
myreal-estate.us/Palo-Alto-CA

Palo Alto Wsp4
Order Palo Alto Wsp4 online or Call us at 800-814-5410
www.superwarehouse.com

Faz Restaurant Sunnyvale
Mediterranean cuisine
408-752-8000 Pianist Lee Allen - Fri-Sat
www.fazrestaurants.com/sun.htm

On Call Doctor
House call MD in Atherton, Menlo Park, Stanford, and Palo Alto.
www.TheTotalCarePractice.com

Kitchen Cabinet Refacing
Free estimate. Will beat any competitor's coupon by 10%
www.valkorefacing.com

[Advertise on this site](#)

Type the numbers you see in the image on the right:



Please note by clicking on "Post Comment" you acknowledge that you have read the **Terms of Service** and the comment you are posting is in compliance with such terms. **Be polite.** Inappropriate posts may be removed by the moderator.

© Copyright 2006 . All rights reserved. [RSS](#)

h9 elapsed time: 0.103