

## REVIEWS: Theatre B's Dead Man's Cell Phone

***Consistent with their quirky and contemporary style of theatre, the opening production for Theatre B's season, Dead Man's Cell Phone, by Sarah Ruhl, builds a dark comedy around a ringing cell phone, belonging, as it happens, to a man who died in a cafe .***

The set, reminiscent of cell phone designs, glides from place to place, opening, closing, and neatly folding in on itself, provides the stark, straight feel of technology's rigid rules---on or off, open or closed, one or zero. Even the colors, of lack of, reflect inanimate, rather than life and verdant nature. The story, while centered around a cell phone, feels like its take place inside one.

An appropriate design for what becomes, at times, a fantastical dream with angels and waltzes and karate. ***Drawn in by the realistic acting, we are jarred by sudden violent and bizarre events of the play---as if we were having a perfectly normal cell phone conversation, and then, as technology does, the phone suddenly and randomly malfunctions in an unexpected way.***

***In the intimate space of the Main Avenue Theatre, we are able to appreciate the subtleties of every glance, every sigh, and every raised eyebrow.*** When this play erupts in loud, surrealistic violence, it's almost painful---as if we are inside a television, seeing the stunts up close.

***Filled with good acting, Dead Man's Cell Phone features Tierney Michon, Matthew Berdahl, Mary Cochran and Colin Froeber in excellent form.*** In fact, there is not a weak performance in the entire cast. Mary Cochran's mommy-dearest is particularly delicious, and Aimee Klein's Hermia shows a gift for timing and depth.

Ultimately, the production is an interesting tale, addressing our culture's obsession with cell phones, hypothesizing our lives can be told through our phone calls and contacts lists, with even the most unlikely of us ruled by a ringing phone.

Theatre B's Dead Man's Cell Phone runs weekends through October 26th.

I'm Brandy Lee.

