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Change is a good thing at Noble Fool

I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change

Through July 19 |
\$27-\$59
Thur to Fri 8 p.m., Sat 5 &
8:30 p.m., and Sun 2 p.m.
Noble Fool Theatricals,
Pheasant Run Resort &
Spa, 4051 E Main St., St.
Charles, 630 584-6342 or
pheasantrun.com



By **Catey Sullivan**
Theatre critic

It starts with the Druids. Or maybe just monks. Either way, their somber dirge, an ancient chant in a minor key dripping with the weight of all history and humanity, evokes our eternal search for significance on this swiftly tilting planet. Or at least, the search for a decent sushi bar and a date that doesn't reveal themselves to be a total nut job before the first dirty martini is knocked back. Thus begins the epic quest for love from first date to final rites in Joe DiPetro's musical revue, *I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change*.

From antediluvian pagan priests hunched under heavy, hooded cloaks to contemporary singles tearing about in boxers and bras, *Change* takes audiences on a familiar journey. It begins as members of some Stonehenge-era sect proclaim, "Let there be light," with the sort of momentous reverberation and stentorian seriousness that would do Moses proud. A short bit of exposition later ("And then Man asked Woman if she was

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busy, and then Woman said she'd have to check.”), we cut to the chase as Woman proclaims “Ok, how about this — we get married, you vow your eternal love for me, I expel a bunch of miniature humans who are totally dependent on us for 18 years, you get a job, you stay home weekends and you never see another women naked for the rest of your life.” Surely, it's a lyric to freeze the feet of the most enthusiastic fiancé. The fact that it's delivered with the gravity of a Latin High Mass makes it all the funnier.

Deftly directed by Tom Mullen, the Noble Fool production elicits plenty of laughs through fast-paced vignettes detailing the universal battles and truces of the sexes. The revue is hardly groundbreaking in its depictions of love, lust and loss, but the cast is infectiously enthusiastic. Mullen keeps the pace snappy and music director Ken Jones ensures the soundscape is richly melodic. It's an amusing, if not revelatory, show.

The humor relies to a large extent on stereotypes. Women love shoes and shopping. Men are reduced to grunting slobs when Monday Night Football's on. It's utterly predictable stuff, but the cast finds just enough truth in the clichés to make them entertaining.

Once monks morph into contemporary singles, *Change* unleashes a whirlwind of nightmarish dating scenarios. With “Not Tonight, I'm Busy, Busy, Busy,” we get two over-scheduled professionals whose Blackberries direct them to skip the first, second and third dates and go right to the sex. But when the woman realizes first-time sex is always fraught and time-consuming, they go right to the morning after. And so it goes until (in the span of five minutes) they've had a significant romance, break up and run into each other years later.

Some of the rapid-fire vignettes are better than others. “A Stud and a Babe” ranges from strident to stupid as a nasally, Ugly Betty clone turns into a vamp simply by whipping off her glasses, letting down her hair and affecting a husky tone of voice. But the cast compensates with “A Serious Single Man Drought” and the faux tragic country western twang of “Always a Bridesmaid.”

While the first act takes us through the wedding, the second half focuses on the stresses of parenthood and sunsets of senior citizenship. It's clear men and women are endlessly crashing into each other like bumper cars, but with *Change*, the collisions are mighty entertaining.

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