
October 2, 2006**THEATER REVIEW | 'FOOLS AND LOVERS'**

Speak Low if You Speak Love? Nah, Sing Out Loud

By ANNE MIDGETTE

Weddings are touching and funny. They're also clichéd, slightly tacky and embarrassing. "Fools and Lovers," a musical about a chintzy wedding, aims at the former qualities and partakes, far more than it means to, of all of the latter.

Did I mention [Shakespeare](#)? Shakespeare is a great poet and playwright. He is so great that he inspired Gregory Wolfe, a founder of the company Moonwork, to take some of his favorite passages and transform them into the book of "Fools and Lovers."

The father of the bride toasts her with a sonnet. The photographer roams around asking, "Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?" A bridesmaid (Yvonne Roen) fights off the unwanted advances of the best man; then, in an accent to rival [Fran Drescher](#)'s, dismisses him: "What a piece of work is a man." The bride breaks into a song: "To be or not to be — married." The piece just keeps topping itself.

To capture the ambience of a wedding properly, it helps to have all of the participants sound like amateurs. There was no miking, and not everyone could carry a tune. (An exception was the minister, Djola Branner, whose gospel-tinged rendition of "The quality of mercy is not strained" was downright catchy.) It also helps to have cheap-sounding music rendered on a couple of synthesizers with a drum set. The music of Andrew Sherman ("Debbie Does Dallas") perfectly replicated the aesthetic of a second-rate wedding band.

The best single moment was the first dance scene. The performers may not have been able to sing or, in many cases, act; but they danced way better than your average wedding guests.

It's hard to imagine this idea getting past anyone, apart from the editors of the humorous weekly paper The Onion. But since it did, one can hardly wait for the group's next project: perhaps a musical comedy about a funeral, told entirely through Goethe texts? Get your tickets now.

"Fools and Lovers" continues through Oct. 15 at the Connelly Theater, 220 East Fourth Street, between Avenues A and B, East Village; (212) 868-4444.

[Copyright 2006 The New York Times Company](#)

[Privacy Policy](#) | [Search](#) | [Corrections](#) | [RSS](#) | [First Look](#) | [Help](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [Work for Us](#) | [Site Map](#)
