

April 4, 2010  
By Blog Critics

The play is also about “sex, lies, and videotape.” Besides the writer, Lucy Adams, we meet a Hollywood film writer who is torn between writing commercial crap and the Great American Film. His name is John Radazzo and he is played by Nick Mennell. Lucy and John end up having a torrid affair. We also find Lucy’s uncle, Jeremy Fisher (Jason Stuart), a flamboyant gay producer who is looking for the smash hit. Jeremy is in cahoots with a predatory producer, Angela King (Denise Dowse), who has decided that the movie needs to be a musical, a musical about the Boston Tea Party.

Her frenetic assistant, played by the wonderful young actor Stuart W. Calhoun, writes grunge rock and plans to write the music for the film. He teams up with the much older Jeremy in a December/June relationship. We are also introduced to the voice and the back of her head of Jeremy’s famous mother, who bosses him around. In between we see videotape of offstage scenes that prove very little. The problem with the script is that it is not believable. The premise is ridiculous and not in a good way, though playwright Susan Rubin can write some amusing dialogue.

What saves this production is the smart direction, the set by Victoria Profit that solves the problem of multiple spaces yet still always suggests Los Angeles, and most of all the actors. All the actors are good and do what they can with the material. I mentioned Stuart W. Calhoun whom I first saw at the Boston Court in *Dark Play* or *Stories for Boys*. A real standout was the flaming performance by Jason Stuart as Jeremy. He doesn’t miss a beat and is always believable.

There are many much better plays and movies that tell the story of Hollywood sleaze much better; *Speed The Plow* comes to mind. Nevertheless the sterling performances make the production worthwhile. *Above The Line* plays at the Bootleg Theatre until April 24th.