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'Spike Heels' Offers More Questions Than Answers

BY BLAINE SCHULTZ MAY 06, 2019 3:56 P.M.

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Directed by J.J. Gatesman, Milwaukee Entertainment Group's production of Theresa Rebeck's *Spike Heels* will likely catch you off guard. Georgie is a sexy, neurotic wreck who wears high heels because they make her legs look good. Her boss, Edward, is a lawyer who might have threatened to rape her. She is in love with his best friend, Andrew, who thinks he can change her into a sophisticated woman (at one point exclaiming à la *Pygmalion*, "I made you better than this!"). Lydia once dated Edward but is now engaged to Andrew with whom she had an affair while she was still dating Edward. Hardly a tangled web, the character's flaws are on parade. Their choices are their own, and they seem to have accepted who they are and what they do.

Becky Cofta's Georgie has both men wrapped around her little finger, whether she knows or really cares, yet they view her as a pawn to their particular whims, driven by ego and testosterone. Georgie's ambition to move beyond her working-class roots may be the reason she deals with the sexual harassment but is infuriated when she finds that Andrew "gave" her to Edward. Cory Jefferson Hagen's Edward is genuinely unlikeable—traits he is more than happy to arrogantly expound upon. Yet, when Georgie's rage causes her to lose her vision, he demonstrates compassion. Josh Perkins' bookish Andrew comes off as well meaning. Yet, trying to explain the psycho-sociological cycle of why Georgie keeps falling for guys who are cruel to her all but predicts she will be attracted to Edward. By the time Brittany Curran's Lydia makes her appearance, she is merely chum in the water, thanks to the others' actions.

The production offers a realistic take on ego, infidelity and the roles of sex and power in and out of the workplace. It is complicated, and it gets intense. Perhaps the tables get turned; perhaps not. Perhaps there is a happy ending;

perhaps not. One thing is certain: The basement stage of the Brumder Mansion serves as a great setting for slamming doors, throwing glasses of scotch and stomping upstairs.

Through May 18 at the Brumder Mansion, 3046 W. Wisconsin Ave. For tickets, visit milwaukeeentertainmentgroup.com.

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