

CityBeat Fringe Coverage 2008

June 03, 2008

Review: Oatmeal and a Cigarette

Critic's Pick

The set for *Oatmeal and a Cigarette* incorporates more afghans than you could shake a knitting needle at, and pretty soon we know why. Doting big brother Claire, who has been raising Billy for 27 years and answers to “Mommie,” knits in the evenings. Knits enough security blankets for a regiment.

The premise here — Billy is 30 but thinks he’s 3 — is open to plenty of cheap laughs but the script and the cast sidestep temptation. As Billy, Daniel J. Kiely uses his considerable bulk to terrific effect; dread locks and beard only setting off his open face where expressions as pure as primary colors come and go. Claire (Karl Gregory) and Babysitter Jane (Madeline Maher) are in what is at first an unspoken rivalry for Billy’s trust. The competition quickly becomes not only verbal but also loud. Both need Billy to complete their visions of themselves. Claire’s seeing himself as Mommie might stem from a mother who decamped; Babysitter (and graduate student) Jane needs him for the practical purpose of her thesis. Billy is her subject, publication her object, and removal of Billy from what she sees as an unhealthy environment a collateral issue.

Sex is the wild card, of course. Billy’s sexuality. Even for someone who thinks he’s 3, those post-puberty urges come along. Babysitter Jane faces more than she bargained for.

This play, sharp and together and headed inexorably down its road, reached finished form through group action by Bad Dog! Productions of Ithaca, N.Y. The three actors, playwright and director George Sapio (founder of Bad Dog!) and Melissa Thompson, stage manager and Sapio’s co-director, took the idea of Billy and played with it through “improvisation, character games, acting exercises, until the characters and story started to show,” Sapio says. Then he began to write, with continual input from his collaborators.

This is ensemble work ticking along at high speed, with results that are extremely funny and surprisingly moving. All three cast members inhabit their parts as though they lived them, and the pace of the show is just right. Throw in a great imitation of a lawn mower and a tooth-brushing scene that touches the heart, and you have *Oatmeal and a Cigarette*.

A minor quibble: Karl Gregory looks way too young to be Daniel J. Kiely’s older brother and must have taken over supplying his oatmeal at the age of 2. But that’s not vital. Suspension of disbelief is what theater is all about.

— Jane Durrell

Posted at 07:38 AM | [Permalink](#)


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I think this show was incredibly well put together by everyone involved. It was tight, it had very real and very complex views on social 'norms', and most of all.... it made me think. I saw it on Sunday, and it is still with me. That's is something to be said. Bravo! and good luck in NY!

Posted by: Suzanne | [June 03, 2008 at 11:00 AM](#)



I agree with suzanne,i also think this show was incredibly well put together by everyone involved,keep posting it very informative.

by: florence

Posted by: [san diego cosmetic dentists](#) | [June 24, 2009 at 06:19 AM](#)



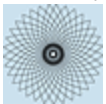
It was very good. I was a little surprised by how much I enjoyed it.
I think I'll pick up. It sounds good.

Posted by: [electronic cigarette reviews](#) | [November 11, 2009 at 08:27 PM](#)



Sounds kind of perverse to have a 30 year old 3 year old get with the baby sitter. Just my kind of humor!!

Posted by: [Blu Electronic Cigarette Reviews](#) | [November 25, 2009 at 05:12 PM](#)



Mmmm sounds like a pretty good breakfast to me!

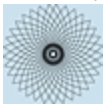
Posted by: [e cigarette](#) | [February 08, 2010 at 08:40 PM](#)



Sounds like a very cool story, great article.

Your girl Mary :)

Posted by: [E Cig](#) | [February 25, 2010 at 02:08 AM](#)



I was a little surprised by how much I enjoyed it.

Posted by: [Homesure Services](#) | [June 29, 2010 at 05:12 AM](#)



It was tight, it had very real and very complex views on social 'norms', and most of all.... it made me think.Great article.

Posted by: [Capital Gold Group](#) | [July 01, 2010 at 01:55 AM](#)



Yum Yum sounds like a good meal :)

Posted by: [electronic cigarette](#) | [July 03, 2010 at 02:14 AM](#)



Very nice post..I was a little surprised by how much I enjoyed it.I think I'll pick up. It sounds good.

Posted by: [Corporate Reputation Management](#) | [July 13, 2010 at 07:41 AM](#)



I saw it on Sunday, and it is still with me. That's is something to be said. Bravo! and good luck in NY!

Posted by: [Total Protect Home Warranty](#) | [July 23, 2010 at 04:03 AM](#)



I think this show was incredibly well put together by everyone involved,keep posting it very informative.

Posted by: [Bathtubs](#) | [July 26, 2010 at 03:41 AM](#)



It was tight, it had very real and very complex views on social 'norms', and most of all.... it made me think.Great article.

Posted by: [blu cig](#) | [September 27, 2010 at 08:37 AM](#)



Hi guys and gals, my name is Andy, is a pleasure to comment on a blog like this, I say that I am very happy to have had the opportunity to read this information very interesting. I would love to receive more articles like this in my mail, I'll be waiting with eager next contribution.

Posted by: [Impotence causes](#) | [October 08, 2010 at 09:59 PM](#)



Let me share my comment with everyone, good evening, is a pleasure for me to tell, I am a young man who has the habit of reading at night, tonight is something special, and I found this article so sensational, I fell in love is great, very entertaining, and best of all is that it is very interesting information! Thanks ..

Posted by: [Cheap viagra](#) | [October 12, 2010 at 08:04 PM](#)



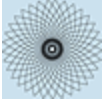
until the characters and story started to show," Sapio says. Then he began to write, with continual input from his collaborators

Posted by: [gucci handbags](#) | [October 14, 2010 at 08:13 AM](#)



As long as we can make good use of time, always have enough time.

Posted by: [cheap coach bags](#) | [November 06, 2010 at 01:58 AM](#)



Written by award-winning New York playwright George Sapiro, Oatmeal explores issues of exploitation, repressed memories, regression, and the power that human instinct holds over every decision we make. Thanks for the information.

Posted by: [CondoTarget.com](#) | [November 10, 2010 at 12:51 AM](#)



i love you post

Posted by: [taobao agent](#) | [November 11, 2010 at 02:49 AM](#)



Blessed be God, the Father of Christ Jesus our Lord, who in Christ has blessed us from heaven with every spiritual blessing.

Posted by: [Air Jordan Shoes](#) | [November 12, 2010 at 01:57 AM](#)



oh! I really wished i could complete my graduation from Harvard. i am just working on it.

Posted by: [UGG UK](#) | [November 18, 2010 at 10:49 AM](#)



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Posted by: [FRANCIS Dyer](#) | [November 18, 2010 at 10:21 PM](#)



It was tight, it had very real and very complex views on social 'norms', and most of all.... it made me think. I saw it on Sunday, and it is still with me.

Posted by: [WebVisible](#) | [November 23, 2010 at 04:09 AM](#)



thank you

Posted by: [cheap nike shoes](#) | [November 24, 2010 at 04:19 AM](#)



I would like to appreciate the great work done by You

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Posted by: [Generic Cialis](#) | [November 25, 2010 at 12:44 AM](#)

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