

## THE BOY IN THE BATHROOM – Review

Jane Zussman

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What a strange and intriguing musical! But hey, this is Peppermint Creek, where we have come to expect the unexpected. Director Chad Badgero received this script by Micheal Lluberes -- who was cast with Chad about 19 years ago in Riverwalk's Man of LaMancha. The world of community theatre circles back and gives us a Michigan-based new musical about, of all things, obsessive compulsive disorder.

After dropping out of college, David (Ben Cassidy) locks himself in the bathroom writing his thesis on rolls of toilet paper while his mom, Pam (Judith Evans) feeds him flat food under the door. When mom breaks her hip (this is Michigan; her son won't come out and shovel the driveway) she hires an in-home helper, Julie (Emily McKay). Julie is itching to get OUT of Michigan, while David is determined to stay IN the bathroom. While mom is out at physical therapy, these opposites find a way to attract and love is born through the bathroom door though they can't even see each other. The set (Chad Badgero) is designed so that WE can see through the cutaway door, but the characters cannot. Joe Dickson has designed interesting lights delineating the in and out of bathroom areas and the moods of the characters.

Ben seems convincingly phobic, yet straightforward and engaging. Emily is very natural and charming with her knock-knock jokes and playful prodding to break through David's defenses. Judith's performance is both funny and touching (and all the more impressive because she stepped in to take over the role just a few days ago from the talented Colleen Bethea, who is experiencing health issues that prevented her from performing.) All three have great singing voices and Music Director James Geer provides lovely keyboard accompaniment.

There's a little surreal, fairy tale-ishness about this show. Can love really cure OCD, without medication or therapy? Couldn't mom slip a laptop under the door? How did that big can of shaving cream get in there...? One can quibble about the practical issues, but this sweet, little musical raises interesting questions about all our neuroses -- wanting to escape, hide, control our futures, be "full" ...

The Boy in the Bathroom continues this Saturday 8pm and Sunday 2pm -- and next week Thursday/Friday/Saturday 8 pm. (no Sunday)

Creole Gallery on Turner Street in Old Town

[www.peppermintcreek.org](http://www.peppermintcreek.org)

Arts Tickets Box Office at 517-372-0945

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