



'Doubting Thomas' finds hope at Secret Rose Theatre

BY MARY MALLORY ON MAY 22, 2015 THEATRE REVIEWS

Thoughtful, well acted, and entertaining, Art Shulman's play *Doubting Thomas* reveals the importance of belonging and being accepted. It examines what it means to be family and the importance of relationships to life. The play also questions materialism over connecting.

Unemployed husband and father John (Ted Ryan) inherits a large sum from a homeless man who could be his long lost father. While researching his life, he stumbles across his father's friend Thomas (Art Shulman) who seems awfully familiar to him as they forge a connection. Thomas makes him consider what is more important: connecting emotionally, or earning material wealth?

Shulman's play examines life priorities and connections while also interjecting gentle humor and teachable moments. It asks thought-provoking questions but sometimes seems a little forced.

Director Stan Mazin keeps things moving, keeping the staging evenhanded without becoming too dramatic. His blocking builds energy even when the pacing between disparate sets sometimes lags.

The cast brings passion to their roles. Adam Simon Krist gives vulnerability to the snotty full of attitude Dylan, acting out his frustrations and hurts. Nancy Van Iderstine's shallow, superficial mother drips bitterness and sarcasm. Shulman's pestering Thomas prods others to question themselves. Ryan brings an easygoing charm and naturalness to John.

Production work, particularly lighting, provides a polished sheen.

While *Doubting Thomas* features occasional adult language, it provides an entertaining though thought-provoking look at family, connecting, and providing.

"Doubting Thomas" plays Fridays and Saturdays at 8pm and Sundays at 2pm, through June 21st, at the Secret Rose Theatre, located at 11246 Magnolia Blvd. in North Hollywood. Tickets are \$24. Call (818)766-3691 or visit www.secretrose.com for information or reservations.