



CHERRY HILL

At the Midtown International Theatre Festival

Cherry Hill by Matt Okin is full of the wisdom and humor you might find in a particularly scuzzy bar, but outside that context, it doesn't seem so profound. All the "problems of this planet" and the existence of God get mixed into the trials of a post-collegiate virgin, his grotesque "Dada," and the surly, popcorn-loving prostitute of both of their dreams. A subplot features incest, a weeping widow, and a guitar player who resembles Kevin Smith's Silent Bob. To call it tasteless is to miss the point, but the dark comedy tries too hard to be all at once edgy, cute, and insightful and instead falls flat, aside from a few well-placed I-love-the-'80s jokes.

Kudos to Bill Barnett for wringing pathos from a role that requires his nipples to hang over a too-small undershirt. But for over-the-top stories of weird Maryland, it's probably best to stick with John Waters.

*Presented by Matt Okin as part of the Midtown International Theatre Festival
at the June Havoc Theatre, 312 W. 36th St., NYC.*

July 15–Aug. 3. Remaining performances: Sun., July 20, 5:30 p.m.; Wed., July 23, 8:30 p.m.; Thu., July 24, 10:30 p.m.; Thu., July 31, 6:30 p.m.; Sun., Aug. 3, 7:30 p.m.

(212) 279-4200 or www.ticketcentral.com.

Reviewed by Ronni Reich

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