

Frankie and Johnny's Love Life: To Be Or Not to Be?

The Studio Theatre's second installment of season two features a two-character play exploring their relationship.

By **KRISTEN FIORE**
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Before a waiting audience sat a comfortable studio apartment, equipped with a messy coffee table, unmade bed, open closet, duct-taped counter stools, an old gas stove and a Dumbo the Elephant stuffed animal sitting atop a green couch.

The set was part of The Studio Theatre at Tierra Del Sol's second installment of season two, "Frankie and Johnny in the Clair de Lune," a two-character play filled with comedy, emotions and the thought-provoking themes of heartache, loneliness and commitment.

The realistic, complicated and strong-willed Frankie is played by Whitney Morse, while Trevin Cooper plays the persistent, sincere and dramatic Johnny.

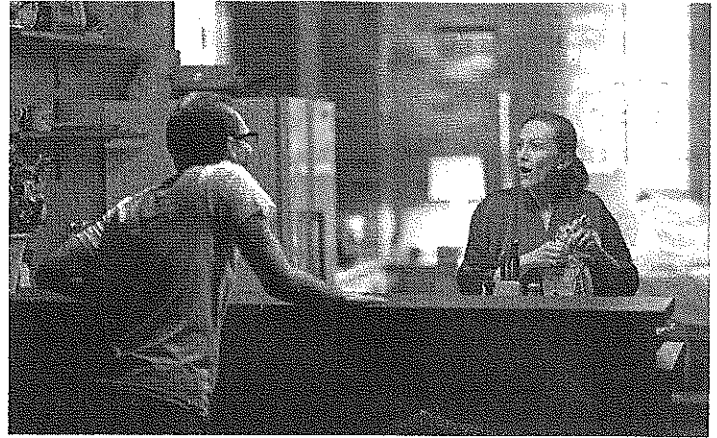
The middle-aged pair work at the same restaurant in New York City. The play, written by Terrence McNally, starts with a passionate sex scene at the end of a first date — at least, what Frankie believes to be the end.

When Johnny doesn't leave the apartment, Frankie continuously tries to hint that he should, but he has other ideas in store for the night.

The story unfolds to reveal a continuous conversation about a relationship that may or may not happen.

Both Morse and Cooper expertly delivered their lines — impressive for the amount of dialogue in the play.

"It's really difficult for two people to carry on that kind of conversation," said audience member Bill Johnston,



Submitted photo

"Frankie and Johnny In The Clair De Lune," at The Studio Theatre at Tierra Del Sol, features Whitney Morse as Frankie and Trevin Cooper as Johnny.

of the Village of Pennecamp. "It's pretty incredible with the amount of lines that they have."

Throughout the conversation, Johnny is overly eager and maybe a little too open, while Frankie is guarded and practical.

As the night turns to the early hours of morning, the two learn about each other — they have similar childhood backgrounds, Johnny likes to quote Shakespeare and Frankie wanted to be an actress.

There are many stories within the story.

They both have scars, but Frankie doesn't want to show hers.

Both characters are lonely as well, but they experience loneliness from different angles. While Frankie watches neighbors from her window, Johnny looks to the moon.

Audience member Bill Edwards, of the Village of Pennecamp, said he found the relationship and dialogue between the characters believable and realistic.

"We've been season subscribers since the first season," Edwards said. "It's always very well done."

By the second act of the play, Johnny still hasn't left

the apartment, and Frankie has started to open up a bit, although, as Johnny puts it, she doesn't want to hear anything that she doesn't already know.

The play is a look through the window at two lonely people with two different ideas of what should happen next.

"Frankie and Johnny" balances speckles of comedy with flecks of more serious moments, creating a rich dialogue and relationship with the potential to go in many different directions.

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