



DON'T HUG ME, WE'RE MARRIED
The Lonny Chapman Theatre

Reviewed by Carol Kaufman Segal



Rebekah Dunn-Bert Emmett-Don Schlossman-Truett Jean Butler-Troy Whitaker

Once again the Olson Brothers have come up with one of their clever, humorous fun, and adorable plays in their popular Don't Hug Me series. Once again the book and lyrics are by Phil Olson and the music is by Paul Olson in this production of Don't Hug Me, We're Married. The world premiere of this musical comedy is being presented by the Group Rep at the Lonny Chapman Theatre in North Hollywood, directed by Doug Engalla and choreographed by Stan Mazin.

The show takes place in late June in a small town in Northern Minnesota called Bunyan Bay where Clara (Rebekah Dunn) and Gunner (Don Schlossman), a married couple, run a small bar called The Bunyan. In the opening as Gunner sings The Greatest Love Song Ever to Clara, we discover that it was simply a dream that Clara was having. Gunner is no longer the romantic man that Clara married, far from it.

But there is love in the air at The Bunyan when wealthy Knute (Bert Emmet) drops by followed by Bernice (Truett Jean Butler), the girl that Knute wants to marry. Unfortunately, Bernice is not interested in Knute or his money and she announces that she is going to marry Aarvid (Troy Whitaker). When Aarvid arrives at The Bunyan, he and Bernice are all lovey dovey and he proposes. The romance has obviously gone out of Gunner as he never shows any feelings towards Clara.

The next guest to arrive at The Bunyan is Gunner's sister Trigger (you will have to see for yourself who plays Trigger) who insists that she is going to marry Knute. Well after all is said and done and some of the clever and wonderful songs are sung, in the end, everyone ends up happy ever after.

All of the songs are clever as is the play itself; some that stand out are When Will I Find Love (Knute), I Love My Man (Trigger), The Day That Bob Dylan Was Here (Gunner), and We Are Gathered Here Today (Clara, Ensemble). By the way, the magic jukebox that sets off all of the musical songs is in its usual place on the set.

Don't Hug Me, We're Married plays Fridays and Saturdays at 8 PM, Sundays at 2 PM through November 15, 2014. The Lonny Chapman Theatre is located at 10900 Burbank Blvd., in North Hollywood. For ticket information, call (818) 763-5990 or go online at www.thegroupprep.com

Photo: Doug Engalla