



# SEX WITH STRANGERS

## Portland Center Stage flirts with mature themes

BY ANDREW KOCZIAN

“Sex with Strangers” is raising some eyebrows.

Although most of the Portland Center Stage productions are geared towards the high school age range, this month seems to be another story. A slightly more adult story.

Set in modern times, this play written by Laura Eason and directed by Brandon Woolley, highlights the generational changes in human interactions as technology continues to barricade people from face to face communication.

With only two actors in the performance, Eason highlights her theme through polar opposite characters who quickly find themselves intimately attracted.

The play follows characters Olivia (played by Danielle Slavick) and Ethan (played by Christopher M. Smith) as they are forced to share a cabin

together for a weekend. Although both are published authors, Ethan is a young, successful douchebag, while Olivia is an aging, self-conscious author afraid of another bad review.

Eason uses this dynamic relationship between Olivia and Ethan to build dramatic tension while attempting to shed light on the bittersweet relationship between technology and success, and happiness found in simplicity and love.

Muddled between a slew of profanities and “awkward groping in the dark” used as scene transitions, was a message that seemed to strike true with the audience in attendance, which was mostly made up of senior citizens and couples over 35: Where has chivalry gone?

If that’s not enough to intrigue, this play prefaces the audience as it includes partial nudity, showcasing

Smith’s tush and Slavick’s side boob. This play is not your typical “Nutcracker.”

With the extreme, almost uncomfortably vulgar dialogue, the constant sex and Smith parading around in his underwear for half the play, it seems to have all the ingredients for a Viagra-fueled escapade for couples who want to heat things up without starting a fire.

In essence, it was somewhat reminiscent of a soft-core porn that didn’t quite make it to HBO. Yet somehow after all said and done, I strangely enjoyed the whole ordeal and would highly recommend seeing it for yourself.

“Sex with Strangers” is showing at the Gerding Theater on the corner of NW 11th Avenue and Davis Street, until Nov. 22. For ticket sales and more information visit: [pcs.org](http://pcs.org).

**“It seems to have all the ingredients for a Viagra-fueled escapade for couples who want to heat things up without starting a fire.”**