This End Up 1980 won't let you down

This End Up 1980, directed by Stephen Rosenfield, with Karen MacDonald, Brad Jones, Karen MacDonald, and Lanie Zera. At the Next Move Theatre through April 27.

"Do you think they'll notice when we're gone?" the Gilbert Stuart portraits of the Washingtons ask each other in the Next Move Theatre's all new comedy revue This End Up 1980. If that question were asked about the Next Move or the current production, the answer would surely be a resounding yes from all of Boston.

Using a simple set and few costumes or props, the show's four players create situations to successfully poke fun at everything from dating to presidential politics. With the wide variety of material the company has chosen to use, there is truly something for everyone.

Brad Jones ribbing himself in the opening for having a rubber face. The rib is not quite fully understood by the audience until they have seen him in action in routines like Roommates, The Comedy Olympics, and Love Us Tender.

He is the Roommate skit, Jones and Martin Anderson play a pair of college roommates who are both supposed to be hard at work in their double. Without saying a single word, they express all the frustration and anger roommates feel when one is trying to work silently and the other is noisily settling in to his work. Before long, they em- bark on a war of annoyances little sounds like opening squeezy drawers and sharpening an entire box of pencils. The beauty of the piece is that there are no drawers or pencil sharpeners or pencils on the stage. The entire scene is imitated, with the actors making all the sound effects vocally.

The Comedy Olympics has Jones playing an Indian comic. All of the jokes are told in nonsense syllables, and all seem to end in the same punishine. Jones' intonation and rhythm, as well as the pregnant pauses before each punch line, were reminiscent of a Henny Youngman routine.

Jones' third outstanding routine is our introduction to the First Church of Elvis. He comes out as a priest wearing a plastic hairpiece made to look like the King's own hair. With his three aides, he warns the audience against Elvis imitators for several minutes before launching into his own Presley impersonation.

The most startling routine in the play occurs immediately before the intermission. Just when the audience thinks the lights are about to come up, Lanie Zera walks out on stage in a fur coat and armfuls of jewelry. She proceeds to claim that she is the lucky woman that Elvis has chosen to marry. She then proceeds to claim that she is a priest wearing a plastic wig and a veil, that Elvis is her father, and that she is a princess. The audience is shocked into silence.

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