



DIEGO & DREW SAY I DO

REVIEW - April 6, 2016, By Rod Stafford-Hagwood



Ben Antipuna (Diego) and Eric O'Keefe (Drew) star in "Diego and Drew Say I Do," running through April 10 at the Broward Center for the Performing Arts in Fort Lauderdale. (Meagan Nagy / Courtesy)

You're either the kind of person who likes a fourth wall firmly in place or you're not. If you are somewhere between loving interactive theater and open to a permeable fourth wall, then "Diego and Drew Say I Do," through April 10 at the Broward Center for the Performing Arts, might just be the musical-comedy for you.

The immersive show has the cast spread all through the Abdo New River Room, the Broward Center's cabaret-style space that with "Diego and Drew" becomes a banquet hall for the same-sex wedding at the center of the comedy. For the audience, who are

treated as wedding guests from the time they enter the space, the theatric event even features a buffet dinner, wedding cake and champagne toast in a setup reminiscent of the off-Broadway hit "Tony n' Tina's Wedding."

Like that show, "Diego and Drew" trades mostly in broadly drawn stereotypes. Aside from the low-hanging fruit of gay nuptials, writers Jennifer Sierra-Grobbelaar and Matt May get some laughs from the clash of Diego's (Benny Antipuna) Puerto Rican family and Drew's (Eric O'Keefe) Waspy southern family. It's a crowd-pleaser, if not a bit saggy and predictable, right down to the drag queen Raven Evermore (Kent Wilson) officiating the ceremony.

But then, just before dinner is served, the wedding singer comes on, and "Diego and Drew" is energized, finding its voice before deploying some clever second-act twists. Vance Treble (Mike Westrich) is a former member of the boy band Lover Boys who now has a solo hit with "Party in My Pants," a song composed by Sierra-Grobbelaar, May and the show's musical director, Maciej Osada-Sobczynski. Treble's smarmy crooning puts the comedy in the wink-and-nudge category, where it belongs.

"Diego and Drew Say I Do" runs through April 10 at the Broward Center for the Performing Arts, 201 SW Fifth Avenue, in Fort Lauderdale. Showtimes are 8 p.m. Thursday, Friday and Saturday; 6 p.m. Sunday; with a 4 p.m. matinee Saturday and a 1 p.m. matinee Sunday. Tickets cost \$59.50 and include buffet dinner, cake and champagne toast (there is a cash bar). VIP tickets for select performances cost \$105 and include reserved seating, a meet and greet with the cast and a signed poster. To order, call 954-462-0222 or go to BrowardCenter.org.



Jeffrey Bruce (Chauncy) and Mike Westrich (Vance Treble) star in "Diego and Drew Say I Do"