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Review: ‘Chess Match No. 5’—A Tri Composer John Cage

Theater News & Reviews



By Megan Wrappe, Contributing Writer, March 22, 2017

Chess Match No. 5 is the current production by the Abington Theatre Company playing at the June which felt more like a 90 minute monologue, centers around two characters, He (Will Bond) and She spent playing a game of chess while eating toast and drinking tea. While both Bond and Lauren are were definitely challenged by their material. *Chess Match No. 5* is based entirely on John Cage's political writings and statements. He and She speak line upon line of dialogue extracted from Cage's may only resonate with a select segment of an audience at best.

But if you separate the source material from the production, you actually have a well put together st have quite impressive credits, being active members of director Anne Bogart's SITl Company. The t well, making their easy chemistry quite evident. The monotone lines couldn't take away their fluid b to break the fourth wall, going back and forth seamlessly.

Ms. Bogart knows what she's doing when it comes to directing, despite the less than amusing subje there has been an extreme amount of thought put into the staging, lighting (Brian H. Scott), and sim

If you have never heard of John Cage before, then *Chess Match No. 5* may run on deaf ears. For all that, there is likely to be an appreciation of hearing actual text pulled straight from his writings and have. On the whole, *Chess Match No. 5* may suffer from its source material being directed to such a specific whereby the overall impact may be lost on many.

Chess Match No. 5 (world premiere) by the Abingdon Theatre Company presented at the June Havoc Street, running through April 2, 2017. Text arranged by Jocelyn Clarke from the words of John Cage; conceived and directed by Anne Bogart; choreography by Barney O'Hanlon; scenic and costume design by Brian H Scott; sound design by Darron L West. Cast: Will Bond and Ellen Lauren.

Cover: Ellen Lauren and Will Bond in 'Chess Match No. 5,' photo: Maria Baranova.

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