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When you arrive at the Round House Theatre for [Adam Gwon](#)'s stunning musical ORDINARY DAYS, you notice immediately the rows of newspaper boxes on both sides of the stage. There's one for the New York Times, Newsday, The Daily News, The New York Post, and even the Washington Post (who deserve credit for obtaining all of these props). And at certain times during the 90 minute intermission-less show, they even light up, a cute effect by Scenic Designer Misha Kachman. The set is simple. You notice a table from Starbucks, a fire escape up high, the interior of an apartment.

Smack in the middle of the stage is the ebony grand piano that Musical Director William Yanesh plays with panache. I noticed in the credits that Yanesh was at piano for [Signature Theatre](#)'s wonderful THE LAST FIVE YEARS written by [Jason Robert Brown](#). One will notice that Gwon's gorgeous piano work will remind one of Brown's. In fact, two of the stars of ORDINARY DAYS, were also in that Signature production, here reunited again playing the roles of Warren and Deb, [Samuel Edgerly](#) and [Erin Weaver](#). They work beautifully together AGAIN! Is there another show for the two of them in the future?

Rounding out the four character cast is Janine Divita (Claire) and [Will Gartshore](#) (Jason). The two of them also work well together as they face uncertainty and hesitation in making that big decision all couples eventually face, marriage.

I love this show. I first saw it Off-Broadway in 2009 when it was presented by the Roundabout Theatre Company (not to be confused with the Round House Theatre Company). Two of its stars were [Jared Gertner](#) (now starring in the London production of THE BOOK OF MORMON), and [Hunter Foster](#) (who was so memorable in the original Broadway cast of the musical URINETOWN. And what a coincidence, not only has [Will Gartshore](#) played in Foster's play SUMMER OF '42 at the Round House, he played Foster's starring role in URINETOWN at Signature.

Gwon has the great musical theater team of Ahrens and Flaherty for helping achieve his success. In fact, they write a glowing review of his work for the Original Cast Recording on [Ghostlight Records](#). (I suggest that Round House follow the lead of Olney Theatre Center and [Signature Theatre](#) by selling the CD.)

ORDINARY DAYS is a song cycle made up of 19 songs without much dialogue and it works beautifully. I love listening to the CD and especially enjoy "Let Things Go", "Favorite Places", and "Life Story". The story involves a graduate student (Deb) who loses her master's thesis on the New York subway and Warren, an aspiring artist who finds it and agrees to meet Deb at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, in front of a Monet to return her work. The other couple, Jason and Claire, are about to move in together and

how that would affect their relationship. Remember the Sondheim lyric "It's the little things we do together..."?

The musical is about every day life and it's ups and downs and how to confront them.

Director [Matthew Gardiner](#) (so known for his great work at the Signature where he is the Associate Artistic Director) once again establishes himself as a premier director. His work here is just plain astonishing, working with just four actors, a minimalist set, 19 songs and a piano. He couldn't have selected a better cast. He is aided by a terrific lighting designer ([Justin Thomas](#)), appropriate costumes (Frank Labovitz) and great sound design ([Eric Shimeloni](#)). There is also a terrific piece in the program by Dramaturg Brent Stansell about Composer Gwon who's life story I am very familiar with since he went to both the Carver Center for the Arts in Towson, MD and NYU with my daughter. I still recall his lovely music for MOTHER COURAGE while at NYU.

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