

ADVERTISE
WITH US
CLICK HERE!



METROWEEKLY



ADVERTISE
WITH US
CLICK HERE!

FEATURES NEWS + POLITICS ARTS + ENTERTAINMENT LIFE + LEISURE COMMUNITY NIGHTLIFE SCENE

Google™ Custom Search

Search

Marriott Gay Travel

 marriott.com/LGBTTravel

Get Gay Travel Specials & Packages. Be You, With Us. Book Marriott.



[Home](#) / [Arts + Entertainment](#) / [Dance](#) / Extraordinary Ordinary Days at Round House

Extraordinary Ordinary Days at Round House

Ordinary Days is the rare musical that ends before you're ready to part with it

By [Doug Rule](#) on June 5, 2014

[@ruleonwriting](#)

 Like 1  Tweet 1  +1 0  Pin it

There are moments when singing actress Janine DiVita may remind you of Idina Menzel — from her pretty, pristine soprano voice to even the way she presents herself as Claire, DiVita's character in the new Round House Theatre production of *Ordinary Days*.

There are even similarities that could be teased out between [Adam Gwon's](#) musical and Brian Yorkey and Tom Kitt's *If/Then*, the Tony-nominated new musical Menzel first offered D.C. theatergoers in a pre-Broadway trial last November. But on most counts, Gwon's *Ordinary Days*, which was a hit Off Broadway five years ago and is only now making its D.C. area debut, would stack up better.

A native of Baltimore, Gwon doesn't confuse us with a convoluted plot, and he doesn't get nearly as carried away with overwrought music, the way Yorkey and Kitt did. Though you might wish for sharper melodies or more hooks to hum, Gwon's music in *Ordinary Days* doesn't veer into needlessly showoff territory. It always stays on the right side of tunefulness. Gwon's story is easy enough to follow too, presented chiefly through lyrics in this mostly sung-through musical.

Like *If/Then*, the focus is on the complex experiences of angst and ennui, energy and opportunity — even if just by happenstance — that comes with living in New York. DiVita's character Claire is wrestling with a still-new

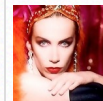


Ordinary Days
Photo by Danisha Crosby



MOST POPULAR

Most Viewed Recent Posts Tags



50 Best Pop Albums of the '90s



Obama proclaims June LGBT Pride Month



Fox News criticized for lack of homophobia



5 Summer 2014 picks for LGBT travelers



Gay Council Candidate Receives Possible Threat,

relationship with Jason, played with gusto by Will Gartshore. Newly cohabiting, Claire is increasingly annoyed and frustrated by the little things that Jason says or does. If she were to leave him — well, thankfully this isn't *If/Then*, and *Ordinary Days* never gets that burdened by the hypothetical and existential. A sudden development toward show's end helps her decide what to do, offering a satisfactory sense of resolution.

The other twosome in this vignette-style four-character play is strictly platonic, Warren (a vibrant Samuel Edgerly) and Deb (Erin Weaver). Warren is a gay aspiring artist, more optimistic than he probably should be given that his only job, such as it is, is as an assistant of sorts to a more established painter. His duties chiefly involve the dehumanizing job of handing out fliers about his boss to passersby on the street — and then heading back to his boss's high-rise apartment with a balcony to watch his cat. "A professional cat-sitter," Deb calls him, after they meet at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Deb, meanwhile, is starting to doubt her place in the world, stuck between her past in a dead-end "suburb of a suburb" hometown and her present sense of feeling lost in the bustling big city, working on her graduate dissertation.

Every one of Gwon's characters is realistic and relatable, and all four actors bring them to fitting life on stage. Ultimately, Weaver leaves the strongest impression, making Deb eminently likeable even in her most jaded and neurotic moments. Weaver also gets to sing some of the more amusing songs, including the hilariously pleading "Dear Professor Thompson" and especially the springy and frantic Sondheim-esque "Calm." However, it's DiVita — in true Menzel fashion — who gets to sing the show's biggest anthem, the penultimate "I'll Be Here."

Over the past few years, **Signature Theatre's** Matthew Gardiner has directed productions on nearly every stage in town, often with multiple shows running at once. It was savvy on the part of Round House to hire Gardiner to helm the company's first musical production in seven years. Gardiner does his usual bang-up job in this Round House debut, aided as always by a dependable team of Signature veterans, from the cast to the crew, including Misha Kachman on sets and Frank Labovitz on costumes. William Yanesh serves as musical director, and provides the *only* musical accompaniment other than the assorted sound effects from Eric Shimelonis. That's right, there's no orchestra playing in *Ordinary Days*, which was written with all music emanating from the piano. In Yanesh's hands, you don't miss the dramatic orchestral bends and swells nearly as much as you think you will. It probably helps that the show clocks in at only 80 minutes. In fact, this is the rare musical that ends before you're ready to part with it.

Ordinary Days was the show that introduced Gwon on the New York stage — "a promising newcomer to our talent-hungry musical theater," as the *New York Times* put it in a positive review — but it's officially the second Gwon show to grace the D.C. stage. Signature Theatre commissioned and presented the world premiere of his perky musical *The Boy Detective Fails* way back in 2011. With a couple other Gwon musicals starting to make the rounds, hopefully it won't take another three years to hear from him here again.

Ordinary Days (★★★★) runs to June 22 at Round House Theatre, 4545 East-West Highway, Bethesda. Tickets are \$10 to \$45. Call 240-644-1100 or visit roundhousetheatre.org.

Harrassment



Supreme Court refuses to halt Oregon same-sex marriages



Laverne Cox is TIME's first transgender cover person



New Roost for DC Eagle



Texas GOP excludes gay Republicans from party convention



Apple plans big updates to OS X and iOS

METRO WEEKLY ON TWITTER

Kelsey @calendardeal 10m
Capital Pride 2014 Calendar: AARP presents "Who's Taking Care of You?" Networking reception and panel discussi... binged.it/1kB7e8J

Stuart Harris @ItsStuartHarris 18m
Kishi Bashi's Orchestral Rock: "Sometimes my music is pretty nonsensical, and that's probably because I'm just... binged.it/1mWiRpa

Paul DeMiglio @PaulDinDC29 2 Jun
Great piece in @metroweeky about Ultra-Premium @FOUDREVodka, a @DCLGBTBIZ member! #GetStruckbyFOUDRE bit.ly/SUbxik
Retweeted by FOU-DRÉ Vodka
Expand

Metro Weekly @metroweekly 30m
The Capital Pride Crowd Covers: It happened by accident. We had somehow blundered our way onto the Main Stage ... bit.ly/1xbP7Ma
Retweeted by EqualityRising!
Expand

Metro Weekly @metroweekly 1h
Capital Pride 2014 Calendar: Thursdav. June 5.
Compose new Tweet...



RELATED ITEMS

ADAM GWON

ORDINARY DAYS

ROUND HOUSE THEATRE



1



1



0



[← Previous Story](#)

Moving Tribute

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE...



Hear Them Roar



Post-Halloween Gory Theater at Round House



Victorian-Flavored Frights

Please Leave a Comment



Add a comment...

☒ Also post on Facebook

Posting as Justin Thomas ([Change](#))

[Comment](#)

Facebook social plugin



Free B'fast & Wifi



SpringHill Suites
Alexandria

from **\$99**

[BOOK NOW](#)

Shuttle to Metro & near Old Town



METROWEEKLY FACEBOOK

Washington's LGBT Magazine
1401 West NW, Suite 350
Washington, DC 20005
Like 1005
(202) 683-8830

18,510 people like Metro Weekly.

Follow Us:



Facebook social plugin

ARCHIVES

Select Month

Copyright © 2014 Jansi LLC.

[Archived Magazine PDFs](#) [Site Map](#) [RSS Feed](#)