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The Patsy—Theatre Review



Michael D. Jackson, NY Theater Scene Examiner
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David Greenspan in "The Patsy"
Credits: Transport Group

Rating for The Patsy:

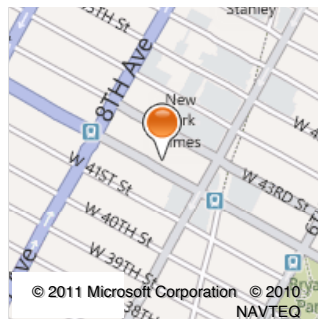


Off Broadway at [The Duke on 42nd Street](#), actor David Greenspan has ingeniously adapted Barry Connors' 1925 hit play, *The Patsy*, with himself playing the entire cast. The original production, which played the Booth Theatre for 245 performances (a solid success for 1928) and was made into a film starring Marion Davies and Marie Dressler in 1928, is a light comedy centered around Patricia, who tries to win the hand of her sister's ex-boyfriend, Tony. There are shenanigans involving the parents' bickering and the snooty sister going back and forth between which boy she should marry. This type of material withered from Broadway a long time ago and was replanted in TV sitcoms and nighttime soaps. What makes the play so winning in this revival (if we should call it that) is the novelty of Mr. Greenspan covering all the roles as he instantly transforms from one character to the next. He has cut the original three act (and probably three hour) play down to 75 minutes, observing all the act breaks and keeping in the real meat of the story to a satisfying end. Who knows what those characters spent an extra hour and a half talking about in 1925, but they say plenty and say it well as rendered by Mr. Greenspan.

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Produced by the [Transport Group](#), the production is directed by Jack Cummings III on a small box set of a living room designed by Dane Laffrey. Mark Barton is able to light the limited space well, with subtle effects, though Mr. Greenspan mostly has general illumination under which to roam the stage freely. Michael Rasbury's sound design is delightfully comical with mundane sounds such as telephone and doorbell rings obviously coming from a needle placed on a phonograph record. Along with period music recordings, this kind of sound effect helps to remind us that the play is indeed that old and adds another element of charm to the quaint romantic comedy.



Location: duke on 42nd street

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The Patsy, might not feel substantial enough today if it were cast and played in the usual way, even if presented in this 75 minute cutting, but with the novelty of Mr. Greenspan's performance the whole thing works as both a tour de force and a nostalgic tribute to a golden era of theatre that is no longer known by any living generations. We can't go back in time, but when an artist can find a way into the past and make it live again, it is always a joy to spend a little time with old Broadway in a new way.

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