

# Meeting of love rivals needs to be spikier

**HENNA NIGHT**  
New Diorama Theatre  
★★★☆☆

In 1999, Amy Rosenthal (daughter of Jack Rosenthal and Maureen Lipman) won the Sunday Times Drama Award for her incisive 50-minute piece. This lucid revival does justice to its refreshingly perceptive take on female relationships, although its limitations are markedly apparent.

Recently dumped Judith leaves a drunken voicemail for her ex, informing him she has the tools to either slash her wrists or henna her hair. She hopes it'll bring him running, but instead gets a visit from Jack's new girlfriend, Ros.

Rosenthal has a lot of fun with this odd-couple pairing: darkly caustic, melodramatic Judith and sensible teacher Ros. Judith lives in a state of perpetual chaos, which Ros is just itching to tidy.

While we're inclined to sympathise with the victim – we're on her turf, a depressingly cramped bedsit – 'the other woman' makes an eloquent case: it's not easy living with the ghost of the spontaneous kook, whose lustre grows with distance, and Ros is equally deserving of happiness.

She lists virtuous deeds to offset her guilt, illustrating the (peculiarly female) desire to be understood, forgiven and seen as good. It is, however, dispiriting to watch two women assigning blame and entirely excusing Jack, who is incessantly referenced, inspires total devotion, yet remains inscrutable.

Rosenthal tries to make this a



■ Hatty Preston (Judith) and Nicola Daley (Ros) in *Henna Night* at the New Diorama Theatre

fair fight, but here Hatty Preston dominates. She relishes Judith's self-protective sarcasm and delves into the raw ugliness of grief: its bitterness, anger and pathetic despair. Nicola Daley is solid, but let down by sluggish delivery.

Peter James's production balances the smart flippancy and bracing honesty, yet there

are times when you wish for something tougher, spikier. The climactic event has quiet power, but feels overly neat in the compressed timeframe. Rosenthal hints that, in another life, these women would be friends, but it doesn't seem plausible in this one.

Until June 28.

Marianka Swain

music. Upbeat dances and the sweetest hymns. £12 (concs £8). 7.30pm. Friday, June 27.

## Comedy

**Monkey Business.** The Sir Richard Steele, 97 Haverstock Hill, NW3. John Hastings, Aaron Twitchen, Richard Lindsay, James Vietch and MC Martin Besserman. monkeybusinesscomedyclub.co.uk. £12.50 (concs £10). 8.45pm. Saturday, June 21.

**Fosters Comedy Live.** Jongleurs, 11 East Yard, Chalk Farm Road, NW1. Friday, June 20: venue closed for a private event. Saturday, June 21: Toby Hadoke, Andrew Bird, Freddie Farrell and Mick Ferry. 8pm.

## Weekly Clubs and Classes

**Fleet Singers Community Choir.** Gospel Oak Methodist Church, Agincourt/Lisburne Road, NW3. Weekly rehearsal 7.30pm-9.30pm. Until Monday, July 21.

**Abbey Community Centre.** 222c Belsize Road, NW6. 07447 932564. **Over-50 Men's IT.** Free. 11.30am-1.30pm. Wednesdays. **Coffee morning.** 10.30am-noon. Fridays. **Bingo.** 2pm-3pm. Tuesdays.

**Fortune Green Choir.** Emmanuel Church, Lyncroft Gardens, West Hampstead, NW6. 7pm-8.30pm. Details at sing-for-fun-in-fortune-green.webeden.co.uk.

**Royal Free Music Society Choir.** Peter Samuel Hall, Royal Free Hospital, Hampstead, NW3. Details on 07801 278365 or visit royalfreemusicsociety.org.uk. 7pm-8.30pm. Thursdays.

**Hampstead Photographic Society.** The Crypt, St John's Church, Church Row, Hampstead, NW3. This week: AGM. 8pm. Tuesdays.

**Earth, Twig and Fire.** Highgate Society Hall, Pond Square, N6. For children aged six to nine years. Outdoor activities. Details on 07712 885974. 4.30pm-6pm. Wednesdays.

**Ivy House Toddlers.** London Jewish Cultural Centre, 94-96 North End Road, Golders Green, NW11. 9.30am-10.45am. £5. Fridays.

**Holly Lodge Community Centre.** 30 Makepeace Avenue, Highgate, N6. 020 8342 9524. **Hatha yoga class:** 2pm-3pm. Thursdays. **Tai Chi class:** 8pm-9pm. Thursdays. **Women's Institute.** 7.30pm-9.30pm. Every third Wednesday of the month.

**Belsize Wood and Adelaide Local Nature Reserve Green Gym.** At Adelaide on the last Sunday of the month, all other Sundays at Belsize Wood. Free. For ages 14 and above. Details on 07769 642395 (weekdays). 11am-2pm. Sundays.

**Fleet Music Group.** Swiss Cottage Community Centre, Winchester Road, NW3. Mainly classical music. Contact 020 7222 0059. 3pm-5pm. Fridays.

**Weekly Clubs at Burgh House.** New End Square, Hampstead, NW3. **Bridge:** 1.30pm. Wednesdays. **Scrabble:** 2pm. Thursdays. **Singing Sessions:** 12.15pm-1.15pm. Fridays.

**Primrose Hill Community Choir.** Primrose Hill Community Centre, 29 Hopkinsons Place, NW1. 020 7586 8327. 7.30pm-9.30pm. Mondays.

**Raised Voices Political Choir.** Doreen Bazell Community Centre, Chenies Place, Somers Town, NW1. 7.30pm-9.30pm. Thursdays.

**Hampstead Music Club.** Burgh House, New End Square, Hampstead, or Christian Community, 34 Glenilla Road, Belsize Park. Contact anna.slavin@orange.net. Tuesday evenings.

**Over-60s Keep Fit Class.** Primrose Hill Community Centre, 29 Hopkinsons Place, NW1. 020 7586 8327. 3pm-4pm. Free. Tuesdays.

**Life Drawing Class.** Hampstead Community Centre, High Street, NW3. Details on 020 7794 8313. £9 per session. 7pm-9.15pm. Wednesdays.

**Energy Healing – Highgate Healing Centre.** Highgate United Reformed Church, Pond Square, Highgate, N6. £5 donation. Details on 07597 199299. 6pm-8pm. Tuesdays.

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**Odeon Camden Town**  
Week commencing:  
Film times for Friday 20th to Thursday 26th June  
Cinema opening times:  
Fri 14:45, Sat-Sun 11:45  
Mon-Thur 14:45  
**12 JUMP STREET (15)**  
AUDIO DESC 1h52m  
Fri 15:20 18:00 20:30  
Sat-Sun 12:30 15:20 18:00 20:30  
Mon-Thur 15:20 18:00 20:30  
**A FAULT IN OUR STARS (12A)**  
W/CHAIR 2h06m  
Fri 15:30 18:10 21:00  
Sat-Sun 12:50 15:30 18:10 21:00  
Mon-Thur 15:30 18:10 21:00  
**CHEF (15)**  
PREVIEWS 2h19m  
Wed-Thur 14:50 17:40 20:45  
**EDGE OF TOMORROW (12A)** AUDIO DESC 1h53m  
Fri 17:50  
Sat-Sun 12:20 17:50  
Mon-Thur 17:50  
**EDGE OF TOMORROW (12A)** 3D AUDIO DESC 1h53m  
Fri-Mon 15:10 20:20  
Tue 15:10  
**MALEFICENT (PG)**  
W/CHAIR AUDIO DESC 2h20m  
Fri 17:30  
Sat-Sun 12:40 17:30  
Mon-Thur 17:30  
**MALEFICENT (PG) 3D**  
W/CHAIR AUDIO DESC 2h20m  
Fri-Sun 15:00 20:00  
Fri-Sun 15:00 20:00  
Fri-Sun 15:00 20:00  
**ROH -**  
Mamon Lescaut (Live) 2014 3h00m  
Tue 18:45  
**X-MEN: DAYS OF FUTURE PAST (12A)**  
W/CHAIR AUDIO DESC 2h07m  
Fri 17:40  
Sat-Sun 12:00 17:40  
Mon-Thur 17:40  
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