



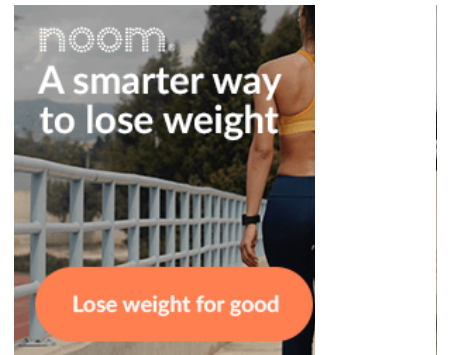
Menu

- HOME
- 2018 THEATER AWARDS
- REVIEWS
- FEATURES
- CITIZEN RAW
- EVENT LISTINGS
- DIGITAL PLAY FESTIVAL
- ABOUT US

**SIGN UP FOR STAGE RAW'S
EMAIL NEWSLETTER**

BROWSE OUR ARCHIVES

Select Month ▾



Smudge

Reviewed by **Jenny Lower**

Hudson Theatres

Through June 28

RECOMMENDED:

If *Smudge* is a horror story, it's more the sort that lurks in the [propecia sale](#) recesses of future parents' brains than a *Rosemary's Baby* — although Colby (Whitney Wellner), mother of the titular offspring, probably could have used some coping strategies from Mia Farrow.

Written by Rachel Axler and [nolvadex sale](#) directed by Rebecca Eisenberg, this comic drama (dark comedy?) follows a young couple who give birth to a sort of cyclops jellyfish baby with a limbless torso, not unlike a hot dog. Was it because of the mother's smoking? Drugs? Colby's prepartum penchant for cheesecake? The doctors don't know, but they send home the wary Colby and newly besotted father Nick (Jesse G. Louis) with a bassinette and some monitoring equipment.

What follows can be interpreted as a comic fable about disability and the fears most adults harbor about being terrible parents. In a less extreme context, Colby's baiting of her offspring ("You're a freak! You're a happenstance!") would constitute horrifying emotional abuse; here it's tempered by cartoonish deformity and Wellner's excellent performance, and channeled into an affecting, complicated portrait of motherhood.

Louis is also good as a more idealized vision of fatherhood, although a subplot involving his philosophical inquiry into ethics and the demographics of the American family never quite gels. Brian Bickerstaff grounds the plot in reality and provides a comic relief valve as Nick's brother Pete.

Axler, who has also written for *The Daily Show*, has produced a script that is sharp and [get viagra online](#) fresh, with a nuanced understanding of the messiness at play in our relationships with our children, our partners, and ourselves.

Hudson Theatres, 6539 Santa Monica Blvd., Hlywd.; through June 28

<http://www.hollywoodfringe.org/projects/2184>

Treya's Last Dance

Reviewed by Jenny Lower

Hudson Theatres

Through June 26

**RECOMMENDED:**

Even without the fiercely intelligent script underlying Shyam Bhatt's one-woman show, her thick South London accent would be enough to charm many American theatergoers. Pleasingly, there's plenty of substance and humor to savor here too.

Directed by Tiffany Nichole Greene, *Treya's Last Dance* meanders through the title character's challenges navigating young adulthood and the contemporary dating market as an enlightened, feminist urbanite with first-generation Indian parents.

Her performance is framed largely as a series of responses to unsavory potential mates at a speed dating venue, whose greatest merit lies in its lack of a "rapey vibe." The conceit is contrived, to be sure — as real first date fodder, Bhatt's responses fall somewhere between aggressively awkward and off-puttingly self-indulgent — but her whip-smart, authentic delivery make her great company. The structure allows her to work in self-deprecating, wry, and moving anecdotes about ill-advised romantic encounters, lavender shortbread tins, and her brother "T." (One of the best recounts a "disturbed romance" costume party, for which Treya suggests dressing up with her sibling as an Indian farmer and his child bride.)

When the themes eventually turn more serious, the shift feels neither manipulative nor heavy-handed. The motif of the dance is a little less clearly plotted, and more dynamic staging, particularly during the extended speed dating stretch, would keep Bhatt from appearing as trapped as her character feels. But Bhatt, via Treya, makes an appealing companion for the duration.

Hudson Theatres, 6539 Santa Monica Blvd., Hlywd; through June 26.

<http://www.hollywoodfringe.org/projects/2152>



< Fringe, 2015: Revolutionary Love/Shakespeare-ish

Being an Actor in a Town Full of Them >

Leave a Reply

Your Name *

Your Email *

Your Website



CAPTCHA Code *

SEARCH STAGE RAW



BACK TO TOP

[CO-TRAVELERS](#) [CONTACT US](#)

PASADENA
ARTS
COUNCIL

STAGE RAW IS A PROJECT OF THE PASADENA ARTS COUNCIL'S EMERGE FISCAL SPONSORSHIP PROGRAM

© 2014 STAGE RAW. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

Site Design by AB3D Creative