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Jitter

Written by Richard Sheinmel
Directed by Clyde Baldo
Arclight Theatre
152 West 71st Street
646-369-7991

Review by Ben Butler

While *Jitter* is officially billed as a comedy, it would be a mistake to view the play purely in these terms. This isn't to say that Richard Sheinmel's one-act tale of love and longing doesn't have its share of amusing moments – it does. But at its core are dramatic and sometimes disturbing revelations into the human condition.



Zach McCoy and Dan Almekinder are touchy-feely twentysomethings who explore unfulfilled desires and personal identity in Richard Sheinmel's highly effective play *Jitter*.

The story revolves around four sexually ambiguous twentysomethings, two boys and two girls. They are old friends who share an evening together revealing past relationships and current sexual leanings. Jo (Cammille Burford) experimented with Lyndie (Collette McGuire) in high school and has since moved on to a series of relationships with women. Lyndie moved on with Paul (Dan Almekinder), who once experimented with Daniel (Zach McCoy). Daniel, who is now completely out of the closet, has had many partners but never true love. Paul, meanwhile, dearly loves Lyndie but now wants to have a sexual experience with Daniel. Confused? Then you're in good company with these fine folks who

can't seem to make up their minds about what they want. As they struggle to figure it out – even to the point where some of the characters act on their physical impulses – the concept of sexual orientation becomes blurred. What we are left with is that timeless human search for true intimacy and identity.

Jitter is the first production by Ladylike Productions, a company whose mission is to "inspire and offer theatre as a community outreach and emotional therapy." As a company that seeks to produce plays with a specific "feminine feminist" message, this first effort is certainly successful in realizing the company's mission. Sheinmel is clearly up to the task of tackling the risky politics and stereotypes that surround homosexuality in American culture. In the end, *Jitter's* message comes across loud and clear. What ultimately happens to its young characters is hopeful, realistic and beautifully acted. It just isn't laugh-out-loud funny.

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