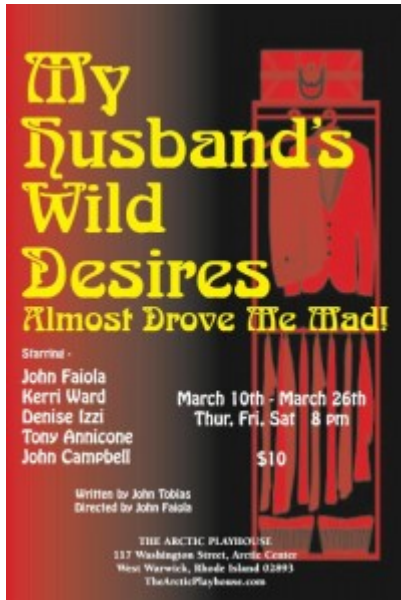


My Husband's Wild Desires Almost Drove Me Mad Challenges Audiences to Face Their Sexual Fantasies with Self-Compassion



In his book *Group Psychology and the Analysis of Ego*, Sigmund Freud defined libido as “the energy...of those instincts which have to do with all that may be comprised under the word ‘love.’” The play *My Husband's Wild Desires Almost Drove Me Mad*, playing through the end of March at the Arctic Playhouse, explores libido and the multitudes of ways it is activated in the human romantic relationship. It's about sex so grab your significant other and go see it; you might have a breakthrough. A comedy written by John Tobias in 2010, the play is a more honest and realistic take on the couple's therapy rom-com model.

The play opens with a conversation between Mrs. Griffin and her building-super Mr. Connelly. The Griffins, a well-to-do and prominent married couple, have hit a dry spot in their marriage, she explains with sophisticated flirtatiousness. He is a powerful businessman who spends his days dominating the ball-bearing sales market and bossing employees around. She is a sensual trophy wife who wants the warmth of honest human emotion, a return to primitive spontaneity and his enthusiastic manhood, something a Viagra allergy and the daily stresses of modern life prevents. This is modern marriage, folks. Steered by the suggestions of famous sex psychologist Dr. Baumgartner and his book *Live Your Fantasy* it is revealed that the couple has embarked on a treacherous journey to make their relationship whole again, and they will do anything to make it happen. They employ both the super and an unfortunate burglar in the pursuit of happiness, and the quest for resolution results in a funny share-out of habits, preferences and turn-offs among willing and un-willing participants.

Kerri Ward does an incredibly good job displaying the multifaceted modalities necessary in 21st-century femininity. She moves easily between the patronizing society wife, the self-conscious and doting wife in need of approval, and an open sexual being with the capacity for both sacrifice and for understanding of her own kinky personal needs. The role calls for someone capable of displaying cool resolve and empathy all at once. It is both disarming and chilling to see her blackmail the super into her fantasies

by exposing both her own exhibitionist tendencies and his trespasses. It is as shaming as it is accepting. John Faiola brings his slap-stick humor and energy to the role of the super, while Tony Annicone convincingly argues his way out of “fantasy” by referencing his own curmudgeonly and vanilla interests, ulcer and all. John Campbell, in the role of Mr. Griffin, is hilarious, displaying his “vulnerability” (not what you might think!) without completely giving up on his macho default, and a plot turn initiated by Denise Izzi (as Mrs. Griffin’s heartbroken and inferior-feeling little sister) brings the point home that it’s all about love.

My Husband’s Wild Desires is a sweet date-night ice breaker played out entirely in a bedroom built by owner and set-designer Jim Belanger. Tucked in the back of a former dog-grooming store-front, the theater offers a roomy seating area and complimentary cookies and coffee, which contributes to a community feeling. Arctic Playhouse is a theater on the main strip in West Warwick and can be hard to find. Plug it into your GPS and enjoy the benefits of the company’s mission to keep ticket prices low. You’re sure to have an honest conversation about your taboo desires with who ever you bring, which can only make for a steamier night!