



## This intimate waltz tells a love story

November 26, 2008

**SUSAN WALKER**  
DANCE WRITER

### Radio Play

★★★★ (out of 4)

Created by Denise Clarke. Until Saturday at the Young Centre, 55 Mill St.

**416-866-8666**

Funny, tender, insightful, original - *Radio Play* is a dancier form of physical theatre. One Yellow Rabbit associate Denise Clarke has created a two-hander that takes both Peggy Baker and her co-star Michael Healey in new directions as performers. On a bare stage occupied only with a high table, they bring to life a fanciful love story.

Healey, the actor, is at first silent, moving and miming through his part as a timid bureaucrat trapped in a dull job. Baker, the dancer, is quite chatty, delivering an interior monologue about how her life has turned into "a radio play that I'm listening to."

She's Marnie Taylor, a 50-year-old dancer whose career has ended. She has no money, no more credit and no work. For the first time, she is going out to look for "a real job."

Her interview is with Angus Portland. Healey perfectly conveys this character in an opening sequence of what looks like a daily ritual of the office worker: a balancing act involving a takeout cup of hot water, a tea bag, a sheaf of documents under the arm, and a one-handed brewing operation.

On her way to her job interview, Taylor slams into the stranger claspng his hot tea and it spills onto his crotch. It's an inauspicious start to an unlikely meeting of two souls who both need to get a life.

The actual conversation between the two characters is heard in a voice-over as they move in ways that suggest their feelings and thoughts might be quite

different from their words. Richard McDowell's sound and jazzy music shifts the mood.

Marnie explains that she's a modern dancer. He says, "show me." Before he knows it, Angus, who last danced while on an acid trip at a Jethro Tull concert in 1977, is waltzing around the stage with Marnie.

Clarke's choreography (a looser, more expansive kind of dancing than Baker's own work) makes a duet out of a conversation, using dance to establish intimacy between two strangers. The very act of dancing with someone, this play seems to say, is an act of love.