

Review from About.com

On the Night of Anthony's 30th Birthday Party . . . Again'

Love Among the Young Ruins

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From [Paul Cozby](#), former About.com Guide

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Cast of '30th Birthday'

Photo courtesy Whirled Peas Productions

On the Night of Anthony's 30th Birthday Party . . . Again is a new farce by L. Pontius where friends face the fears of commitment, growing older, and unrequited hopes.

What ' . . . 30th Birthday' is About

As you might expect, *On the Night of Anthony's 30th Birthday Party . . . Again* takes place on, you guessed it, the night of Anthony's "official" 30th birthday party. (He had one last year, too.)

Anthony doesn't want to admit he's growing older. Charlie, Anthony's partner, is happy to oblige and only wants a happy night. Ben, reluctantly agreeing to announce his engagement to Jenny (who used to be called Rainbow), would like to do anything but that. Kate, who used to be an item with Ben, would like to be nowhere but with him. Max, Kate's boss, would like to be with her. Beth would like to be with someone special. And Otis, well Otis would just like to be.

L. Pontius, an award-winning playwright and screenwriter, aptly labeled *30th Birthday* a farce. It is a door-swinging, mistaken-intentioned, pie-in-the-face evening.

Beneath the veneer of comedy, though, is an exploration of eight twenty-to-thirty somethings, six of whom are not getting what they want from life, or, perhaps said better, not wanting what they've got from life.

Just where should one compromise? Who or what is worth the compromising? And while you're thinking about it, get us all another round of drinks.

Who's Who and What's What

On the Night of Anthony's 30th Birthday Party . . . Again is the latest work from Whirled Peas Productions at [Manhattan Theatre Source](#). (If you don't know this organization, you should. It's a dedicated group of people who support, create, nurture, and love theater.) It was directed by Megan Demarest, who co-produced as well along with Montserrat Mendez.

The show stars Andrew Glaszek, Kate Grande, Tyler Hollinger, Stephanie Lovell, Synge Maher, Brandon Potter, Tom Everett Russell, and Carsey Walker Jr.

The creative team includes Jason Bolen, sets; Carly Hirschberg, costumes; Drew Vanderburg, lighting; Ien DeNio, sound; Danielle Newell, stage manager and board op; and Catherine Amore, Emily Kaczmarek, and Marianna Polyak, assistant stage managers.

Showcase Moments

A farce depends on timing, and *30th Birthday* could stand to set its watch a bit faster in several scenes. At the same time, the work provides showcase moments for the cast members, who were clearly enjoying themselves and helping the audience do so as well.

Kate Grande deserves every laugh she gets in a second act meltdown as true feelings are being revealed. Brandon Potter, who spends the entire night dressed inappropriately for the party (I won't spoil it for you, but I will say Brandon is in the photo above), is delightfully deadpan as the most honest person in the group. And Stephanie Lowell wrings every laugh from the role of the girl who has been set up with one too many "Mr. Rights."

Where and When

- Manhattan Theatre Source
177 Macdougall Street
- [Show Times and Tickets](#)
- **Opening:** March 11, 2009
- **Closing:** March 28, 2009
- **Run Time:** 1 hour, 45 minutes (with intermission)