

'Dog's Life' Sparkles with Canine Fun

By Mark Lowry *Star Telegram Staff*

DALLAS -- Theatre Three closes its season with Sean Grennan and Leah Okimoto's musical tribute to our canine pals, *A Dog's Life*. It's hardly original, but it's just cute enough that audiences, especially dog people, won't want it euthanized anytime soon. Bruce R. Coleman directs and co-designed the costumes (which thankfully, aren't literally for the dogs) with Mark C. Guerra.

The tail: Joel (Cedric Neal) goes to the pound to fetch a dog for the girl he's clinging to. His choices are the show's main pooch, Jack (Gregory Lush), a hyper terrier (Megan Kelly Bates) and a grumpy Rottweiler (Marcus M. Maudlin). He picks Jack, and finds himself in a different kind of relationship when things don't work out with the girl. So it's about the unique bond between human and dog, and the writers don't skimp on the obvious canine jokes and clichés. But, what are you gonna do? It's about dogs!

Best in show: Neal has the best and most consistent vocal ability here, but how can he compete with three actors playing the animals we know so well? Lush, Maudlin, and especially Bates, go all-out with the doggy physical comedy, and it pays off. The only thing more common than tail-chasing jokes was laughter.

Take a bow (wow): This is nothing particularly revelatory, but my guess is that it'll be such a hit that T3 will bring it back for longer runs in its basement space in future seasons. Like another T3 hit, *I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change!*, humans will enjoy *A Dog's Life* because it's so easy to relate to the subject. And if that's not your bag, well, a production of *Cats* opens tonight.

A Dog's Life

Through June 22

7:30 p.m. Thursdays, 8 p.m. Fridays, 2:30 and 8p.m. Saturdays, 2:30 and 7:30 p.m. Sundays

Theatre Three, 2800 Routh St., Dallas

\$10 to \$40

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