



Tableau D'Hôte's Encore perfectly cast

Description

A worthwhile bilingual version of Marc Prescott's play

By **Byron Toben**

It is hard to picture a more perfect cast than the duo assembled for a bilingual production of the play **Encore** by Manitoban **Marc Prescott**.

A married couple, dubbed only "Madame and Monsieur" re-enact their original meeting on every anniversary thereof. Here the six scenes portray that event over 50 years – on their first (paper) anniversary, the 5th (wood), the 10th (tin), the 20th (china), the 25th (silver) and the 50th (gold).

The play also includes perhaps the longest monologue in theatre history of a kiss.





Monsieur (**Matthew Kabwe**), well known to local Shakespeare in the Park goers, delivers this creatively. I contrasted it to the other extreme – Martha’s short declamation in Albee’s *Who’s Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* “I want a big sloppy kiss!”

Madame (**Tania Kontoyanni**), well known to French TV and film audiences, displayed many subtle nuances and even managed a few tears in one passage without artificial enhancers.

Although the company was going to perform the whole in English, a wise decision was made... to make it bilingual.

Mr Prescott translated his own play himself from the original French into English (an exercise, I believe, that has only been performed by one other playwright – Samuel Beckett). Although the company was going to perform the whole in English, a wise decision was made – I am not sure if by Executive Director **Mathieu Murphy-Perron** or by empathetic Stage Director **Liz Valdez** – to make it bilingual.



Well sort of – I guesstimate that the result is about 65% English and 35% French. Whatever the ratio is, it adds a fine texture to the 90-minute show.

Excellent comments by both directors are printed in the program.

Another last minute enhancement was to enlist McGill student violinist **Jacob Burtenshaw** to play sweet music of his own composition as background.

Encore continues at the Mainline Theatre (Mini Main) until May 19.

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Images: courtesy of Tableau d’Hôte Theatre



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Byron Toben, a past president of *The Montreal Press Club*, has been *WestmountMag.ca*'s theatre reviewer since July 2015. Previously, he wrote for since terminated web sites *Rover Arts* and *Charlebois Post*, print weekly *The Downtowner* and print monthly *The Senior Times*. He also is an expert consultant on U.S. work permits for Canadians.



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