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## Brave New Workshop revisits recent past

By Ed Huyck

published: Wed., Mar. 9 2011 @ 11:06AM



Photo courtesy Brave New Workshop

When you produce several all-new comedy shows every year, there's nothing wrong with occasionally taking a breather. Brave New Workshop's *Sarah Palin's Minnesota, or Hindsight is 2011*, blends several favorites from the past decade with everyone's favorite part-time Alaskan politician as our host.

Overall, it's a pretty good time. It should be. After all, these are sketches that have survived the tests of time.

It helps that Ellie Hino does a spot-on Palin. She doesn't just get the hair or the glasses or the loopy way of talking. It's as if Hino has somehow absorbed the essential Palin-ness of her character. It's a brave act by any performer, but one that Hino seems to relish.

With that framework, it's on to the pieces, which not only span years but also plenty of styles. There are a couple of audience participation moments, which can fly or die depending on the crowd (the night I saw the victims, er, invited guests did very well), along with pokes at politics, pop music, and fighting presidents.

Returning favorites include a scene where an innocent tween and her uptight dad have very different interpretations of the latest pop hit, "Butterfly"; and the awesomely dirty (in so many ways) sketch about scrubbing oil-soaked seals. Here, Josh Eakright gets to show us just how much of a perv a seal can be.

Though, like a greatest hits collections, *Sarah Palin's Minnesota* doesn't feel as great as it should be. It's kind of like buying the Beatles's *1* collection and expecting to get the full breadth of the band. It's not just the favorites that are left by the wayside. These bits often worked better amid the original context, where a bevy of similar themed pieces can flow together to create a full experience. With that in mind, maybe it's just a matter of sitting back and enjoying a gentle ballad about wishing herpes and other sexually transmitted diseases on your douchebag ex-boyfriend.

[Sarah Palin's Minnesota](#) runs through June 24 at the Brave New Workshop.

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