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Minnesota is for lovers, ya, sure

Is Brett Favre gay? Are Twins sluggers Joe Mauer and Justin Morneau secret lovers?

These are just two of the questions that animate "Brokeback Mound," one of the hilarious skits in the Brave New Workshop's latest show. The answers to such queries are suggested in a song called "What Joe Doesn't Know," a mock musical-theater number that's a solid hit.

The Workshop is great at coming up with comically suggestive titles. "How to Make Love Like a Minnesotan III: The Full Montevideo," which opened last weekend in Minneapolis, is even funnier than its handle.

At the outset, Joe Bozic, a member of the company, tells us that we will be offended.

But, to quote a muttering Supreme Court justice at the State of the Union address: not true.

The Workshop's latest revue scores very low on the offense meter. About the only thing that comes close to raising hackles for this theatergoer is a PMS skit called "Red Alert" in which a woman at the start of her cycle is compared to the Capuchin monkey from the

1995 film "Outbreak."

Still, I found myself grinning so much during that skit, I hardly had time to be outraged or to utter the word "sexist."

In fact, the troupe's latest show, created and performed by Bozic, Lauren Anderson, Josh Eakright, Mike Fotis, Bobby Gardner and Ellie Hino, is one of their best in awhile. Their send-ups of local figures and mores are often a stitch, even if it's clear that this show is heavy on male humor (men are its primary creators and, I suppose, audience) and elements of it are a bit sophomoric.

"Minnesotan" satirizes macho man-loves (of athletes and their dogs), miscommunication of the sexes ("Wedding Dos and Don'ts") and lowered dating expectations both online at eHarmony ("I can fix him") and at the office ("I Guess You'll Have to Do").

The title of the show suggests a send-up of awkwardly stereotypical Scandinavian Minnesotans. And you can hear the sexual dullness of an Ole and Lena-style couple under some of the skits, including a number called "The Sounds of Sex."

This post-intermission bit also includes the patter of a cash register, timed to the last ka-

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ching, as the sound of accountants getting it on.

Even here, with the theater totally dark, the Brave New Workshop swings for the fences and artfully connects, making its clever "Minnesotan" a comedic home run.

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A horizontal advertisement banner with a dark background on the left and a lighter, textured background on the right. On the left, a person is shown from behind, carrying a large, metallic, spherical object on their back. The text in the center reads: "THE ALUMINUM SHOW" in large, bold letters, followed by "FRIDAY, MARCH 5 - SUNDAY, MARCH 7" and "ON SALE NOW TICKETMASTER.COM". On the right, the "Mystic LAKE" logo is displayed, with "CASINO • HOTEL" and "mysticlake.com" below it. At the bottom center, small text says "Owned and Operated by the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community". A vertical copyright notice "© 2010 Stage Genia Enterprise" is on the far left.

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