



REVIEW: Rock & Roll Theatresports

by Robert Avila, *San Francisco Bay Guardian*, January 18, 2006

In Rock 'n' Roll Theatresports, a battle to the finish is being waged between six teams of veteran improvisers. But then every moment on stage is a battle to finish in an improv tournament, where no one, beginning with the players, knows how anything is going to work out. It's exceptional fun finding out with these first-rate improv pros at work (or rather play) in the eight-week competition leading off Bay Area Theatre Sports' 20th anniversary season.

Conducted and scored as an actual competition, teams receive specific challenges from audience, opposing team, or judges; then create a story, musical, scene, or what-have-you by drawing on a shared lexicon of literally hundreds of theatre games, lightning-fast reflexes, an almost ESP-level rapport with teammates, and considerable powers of acting, mimicry, and cultural recall. A three-judge panel flashes scorecards for each (with the audience vocally rebuking unpopular decisions, and voting on which team rolls a very big die for extra points).

Opening night found the Groupies (Kimberly MacLean, John Remak, and Rebecca Stockley) in a showdown with Holy S**T! (yes they pronounce the asterisks and exclamation point), a Christian rock trio comprised of John Kovacevich, Gerri Lawlor, and Tim Orr. Fresh ideas erupt from these people like zits from a teen. It's pretty amazing, and consistently hilarious.