

“Nobody Loves You” sounds like a pretty definitive, if disheartening, statement. In the 21st Century, it also fits what a sadistic TV producer might call a Dating Game show. And that’s what “Nobody Loves You”, the current production at the Horizon is all about.

Not only does the title fit into today’s world, it has withstood the slings and arrows of almost a century of time. It’s somehow fitting that Wikipedia takes pains to link, but separate, its dual ancestry. Starting out with “Nobody *knows* you when you’re down and out” - that’s a 1920’s ragtime song about a Prohibition-destroyed millionaire, “Nobody knows you when you down and out, In my pocket not one penny, and my friends I haven’t any.”

That became “Nobody Loves You (When You’re Down and Out) in the 1970’s in a song written by John Lennon. Today’s play at the Horizon carries forward this history of clever, precise, meaningful lyrics.

But, if you’re like me, you’ll forget all that as soon as Brad Raymond opens his mouth, starting the show. Nobody can NOT love that voice. Not you, not Nobody!

And, if you’re like me that will begin a sort of primal conflict within yourself, enjoying, often marveling at, the performances of the cast members, at the same time trying to note, and remember, some of the cleverness of the lyrics provided by the authors, Itamar Moses, and Gaby Alter.

Mouthing full of words, a non-existent proscenium arch too wide to contain this talent, a staging cleverness that takes you on stage, back stage, in the TV viewers home, this entertainment all packaged into one memorable group of professionals. You won’t want it to end.

Trying to capture the flavor, here are just a few samples of lyrics from the 19 musical numbers:

One contestant offers his perspective on the reality show:

“You’ll try to find, someone to hold
With a passion, uncontrolled
And you’ll try, until you’re told
That nobody loves you”

Now don’t get me wrong I think girls are the bomb
But they’re also confusing as hell
Like they’ll say a thing but mean a different thing
And I don’t know how I’m s’posed to tell
I’m looking for someone who’s chill and who’s fun

But it hasn’t been easy to find
And what’s even worse is, when she’s normal at first
Then suddenly loses her mind
But if I am your pick I think I will be able

To finally click with a chick who's stable
On basic cable, I just want to be loved

And a discussion between a potential 'pair' - a singing dialogue between Megan, a girl that's ready, in every 'conceivable' way, and a young man with the fortuitously mnemonic, and necessarily so, name, Christian

Christian: I'm saving myself for a special girl
Megan: I'm really amazing in bed
Christian My innermost thoughts are between me and God
Megan I say whatever the hell's in my head
Christian I wanna find someone whose heart is unguarded
Megan I'm ready to party, so let's get it started
Both Oh oh oh oh
Megan Hope you can handle my love
Christian Woah, woah, woah, woah, I wanna share God's love

The Associate Producer's (Jenny's) view:

I hate the way
Some people come here and then act like they're above it
When that just isn't true

Or the PhD candidate's (Jeff's) view:

I hate that too
Like for instance when the thing that people act like
They're above's
Exactly what they do... for a living

Jenny Well how bout you, With your stupid research project
as a Smokescreen for
revenge on your ex?
Jeff Hey, it's complex
And anyway you're even worse, in here.
Promoting this perverse misuse of love and sex
Jenny Please! I despise the way this enterprise
Commodifies the human heart
And uses you all as the bait...
Jeff So what else do you hate?
Jenny I hate politics
And I hate those who don't involve themselves in politics
I don't know which I hate more
Jeff I hate naïve idealists and cynical nihilists

I like open-eyed realists with an idealistic core
Jenny I get annoyed with those who avoid all the issues
Jeff And those who like endless debate
Jenny & Jeff There's so much to hate.
Jenny If you hold onto your hatred
They say it eats you alive from within
Jeff But I'm afraid if I gave mine away
Then all the people I hate would win
I just reject all their bullshit
Jenny Stay rooted and true 'cause I know what I know
And I'll keep it real
Jeff Although...that phrase was
Jeff & Jenny Co-opted long ago

And, of course, there had to be a vaudeville interlocuter with a computer ID:

@EVAN N.L.Y. FAN here
New season having its premiere
I love the hot new cast this year
Hashtag so excited
And as always with the sho-ow
I'll be live tweeting as we go-oh
Sometimes with inside info-oh
Hashtag please provide it
God I love that Christian likes Megan even though she is a
Pagan and the drunkest person in the cast
And that girl Calista has already made my list-a people I
Don't think are gonna last

Episode three what will they cook up
It looks like Dominic's gonna hook up
With Samantha, yep, they took up
Hashtag Evan knew it
And Christian and Megan are going strong now
So I think it won't be long now
Ooh look at that she's wearing a thong now
Hashtag please just do it
And Vladimir is gonna be out of here when his poem gets
The lowest score

Wait, hold on, this news is breaking
I hear that a contestant's taking
Secret breaks to go and visit

A member of the crew

(Yelled into his phone:) Siri, who is it!?
Jeff's not like the other jerks there
And one cute girl named Jenny works there
Is a secret romance brewing
Oh please show us what they're doing!

Episode ten and barely coping
With the fact that I'm still hoping
They'll reveal some secret groping
Frowny face times twenty
So please spare me further trauma
And if something's happening, comma
Show me all the backstage drama!
Hashtag jeff and jenny
Cause that would be better than anything
That's ever been on this show before!
I can't wait, I can't wait
I can't wait, I can't wait
Where there's something I don't know
That's something I hate
I can't wait, I can't wait
Who will they eliminate and
Who will make the final four
I can't wait, I can't wait, I can't wait
To see more! Send!

Jeff & Jenny
People are stupid
They fall for any kind of con
Their hatred is the proof that
what you're onto is the Truth
So shake off all the haters
and just keep on keeping on
Cause people are stupid
So do your thing the way
you think you should
And if everybody hates it
You know you're onto something good

It must be hashtag blatantly obvious
by now that this reviewer is crazy about lyrics.

From the days of Georgia's Johnny Mercer "Too Marvelous for Words" and Cole Porter's "You're the Top"(you're the top! You're the Louvre Museum...a Bendel bonnet, a Shakespeare sonnet, You're Mickey Mouse), it seems clear to me that Moses and Alter deserve the same

permanence.

**Waiting is stupid
I've wasted more time than I should
It's time to grow a pair of ovaries
And go do something good**

Whatever that means!