

SHOW: Does My Bum Wobble?
CAST: Ilse Klink, Jason Kennett, Jo Galloway, Nqobile Sipamla
DIRECTOR: Jaci De Villiers
VENUE: Old Mutual Theatre On The Square, Sandton, until December 31

Coming from behind

BRUCE DENNILL

THIS is a strange production, but not in an LSD-in-your-coffee kind of way. Initially, it seems superficial, but you leave the production on an unexpected high, produced by a number of diverse elements.

First off, there's a genuinely funny script. It takes some time to warm up, and many of the themes are the same observational sort of thing you'd hear from local comedians, but it's done better – perhaps the stand-ups should come, sit down and observe – and has more impact because it's more of a narrative.

Ultimately, and crucially, it's better on pure gag value than most of the one-man comedy shows available in local theatre venues.

The show incorporates a cabaret angle as well, featuring fresh new arrangements (by musical director Roelof Colyn, who is on-stage with his keyboard throughout) of well-known contemporary rock and

pop songs. This includes material from artists as diverse as Talking Heads and Justin Timberlake.

The characters sing the songs as links between scenes as well as during the action, where appropriate, and it's a mechanism that works well. Again, though, it takes some getting used to.

The major themes are love and loneliness, and how three women and a number of men (all played by Jason Kennett, who *also* plays an interfering Jewish mother) cope.

The cast members have a lot to do, what with singing, acting, moving sets around and changing costumes onstage, and perhaps for this reason the acting itself is not entirely convincing. But here's another strange turn: this *adds* to the appeal, rather than detracting from it.

The best explanation for this is likely the charm of the actors and the fact that the characters can all be easily identified with.

There's a Jewish daughter who keeps going on bad dates her mother sets up; the single mom who doesn't want to scare off a new suitor by revealing her son; and the lonely woman who tries to compensate by being loud and brash.

Ilse Klink, playing the latter evokes first cynicism and then sympathy (as well as plenty of laughs). Nqobile Sipamla is vivacious and cheerful, although she has her secrets. Jo Galloway shines with a sort of mesmeric Hollywood glow.

And Kennett switches skins effortlessly without even leaving the stage, able to be both warm and caring and massively annoying within a matter of minutes.

Ultimately, *Does My Bum Wobble?* is about foibles and insecurities, but not in the gym-and-salons way suggested by the title. You'll laugh hysterically, but you'll also be moved. And, curiously, you'll be surprised when it happens.



CHEEKY. Jo Galloway, Ilse Klink, Jason Kennett and Nqobile Sipamla.