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# You can enjoy Beer For Breakfast at the American Heartland Theater

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## Beer For Breakfast at the American Heartland Theater

Rating:

*Beer For Breakfast*, a world premier play by Sean Grennan is a charming comedy seemingly tailor-made for The American Heartland Theater at Crown Center in Kansas City. A small but well appointed cabin in the woods is the setting where four high school friends are getting together for a much needed “man’s weekend.” The aggressive T.J. (Scott Cordes) and his friends, the jobless, passive Mark (played by scriptwriter Sean Grennan) and recent stroke victim Richard (Martin English) drink and complain about their spouses, waiting for the fourth friend Adrian to arrive. Their peace is shattered as Adrian’s wife, Jessie (Cathy Barnett) shows up instead.

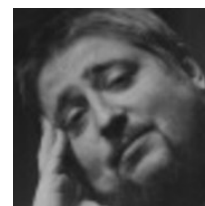
The missing Adrian is unreachable and cryptic voicemail messages are their only clues to his whereabouts. Jessie ruins the “boys only” mood of the weekend with healthy food and chick flicks until she is challenged to a series of contests by the recently divorced T.J. Shots are the penalty, but she proves to be more than a match for these men. The evening ends in a no-holds-barred round of Truth or Dare, where secrets come out and relationships change.

Grennan’s script seems a little old fashioned. Its battle of the sexes theme and I found it hard to believe that men of this age and social station would still feel threatened by a woman invading their turf. However, it plays right into the demographics of the Heartland, where an older audience would identify with these sentiments. The conflicts are believably handled though, and Grennan’s script is funny and it moves along at a peppy pace.

The acting is wonderful all around. Scott Cordes drives the show with his aggressive but

likeable portrayal of a man suddenly out of his element. Cathy Barnett gives a detailed performance that never lets us dislike her, despite her prickly nature. Her chemistry with Cordes is palpable. Grennan is fine as the sad sack everyman, but the real revelation of the play is Martin English. The script requires that his character must be vocally unintelligible due to his character's stroke, but his humanity and decency shines through in every beat.

Beer For Breakfast is running Tuesdays through Sundays from now until February 19, 2012 at The American Heartland Theater located in Crown Center Shopping Center in Kansas City, MO. More information on times and ticket sales are available at [www.ahtkc.com](http://www.ahtkc.com).



**Peter Bakely**

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