



# Adelaide Theatre Guide

[www.theatreguide.com.au](http://www.theatreguide.com.au)

Supporting live theatre in South Australia

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## THE BLIND DATE PROJECT

### Adelaide Cabaret Festival

Artspace

Until 25 June 2021

By Helen Karakulak

"The Blind Date Project" is a fabulous night of improvisation where no one, not even the performers, know what to expect. The premise is simple: Bojana Novakovic is Anna, waiting at a karaoke bar for the date she met online to appear. She has no idea who her date is, until each night a different guest performer arrives.

Entering the Adelaide Festival Centre's Artspace, audiences are immersed into the Karaoke Klub, featuring a well stocked bar, karaoke menus scattered about, and a delightfully groovy feature wall plastered with magazine covers. A few rows of seats between carefully placed atmospheric tables is the only indicator of theatrical convention in the well-arranged space. The contemporary environment is a fresh immersive element crucial to the performance.

Karaoke Queen Lucy Moyer is the first voice you hear upon entering the space as she belts out familiar tunes at the karaoke stage, encouraging audience members to do the same. Moyer then transitions into bar staff as the night continues, serving Anna and her mystery date.

On the night of review, the guest performer is the lovely Tilda Cobham-Hervey as the nervous Audrey, awkwardly presenting Anna with a bouquet of flowers when greeting her. Armed with one line, "Sorry I'm late," Cobham-Hervey presses on with a fun, nervous energy for her character, who we learn has never been on a date with another woman before.

Their interaction begins with lighter yarns about Anna's talented nose as a trait of her skilled winemaking, and which fruits the women would most like to be intimate with. As the date progresses, we hear frequent interruptions of the buzzing of phone calls and notifications. This is the work of director, Tanya Goldberg, who sends directions to the two via phone, deciding what should come next. Cobham-Hervey explains away Audrey's callers as her concerned parents checking in on Audrey because "it's been a big day".

Anna and the audience later learn, after a tense phone call from her ex-boyfriend, that Audrey had only broken up with him that very same day before going out to buy a suit and come on this date. This plot line brings up discussion around how some see women as a solution to a man after a break-up and, given their 14-year age difference, that it shouldn't be Anna's responsibility to guide Audrey through a lesbian awakening.

The fresh-faced and sexually naïve Audrey looks up to the poised and confident Anna, and the two delve into surprisingly deep discussions about love, navigating sexuality and what the types of pornography you watch say about you. Between downing white wine and vodka shots, Anna performs Gloria Gaynor's fun and upbeat, "I will Survive". Although, she insists she's not in a place where she can relate to its content. Later, Cobham-Hervey serenades Anna with a moving performance of Oasis' "Wonderwall". This Karaoke element is a welcomed addition to the performance, allowing them to sink into their characters.



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As these two women reveal the more unhinged elements of themselves to each other, this improvisational experiment does more than entertain. "The Blind Date Project" explores what compels a person to try something new, like taking a chance by swiping right, and the way cravings for respect, excitement, and adoration manifest.

In its Adelaide premiere, "The Blind Date Project" is an intriguing and delightful part of the 2021 Adelaide Cabaret Festival.