

FREE CLASSIFIEDS

FIND A JOB  
FIND A HOUSE

CLICK HERE!

> arkansas medical news

Special Features

- Musicians Showcase
- Downtownlittlerock.com

News & Opinion

- Insiders
- Smart Talk
- Observer
- Letters
- The Week That Was
- Arkansas Reporter
- Cover Stories
- Editorials
- Max Brantley
- Ernest Dumas
- John Brummett
- Bob Lancaster
- Words
- Katherine Whitworth
- Guest Writer

House Blogs

- Arkansas Blog
- Rock Candy
- Eat Arkansas

Community Blogs

- Arkansas R.F.D.
- Billiken Man
- CA Confidential
- Dogtownius
- Hoglawyer
- Moviegoer
- Ninja Poodles
- Street Jazz

Entertainment

- The To-Do List
- TV Highlights
- Arkansongs
- Media
- Best Bets
- A&E News
- Shopping
- Books
- Art Notes
- Theater Reviews
- In Brief
- Movie Listings
- Dining Description
- Dining Review
- Whats Cooking
- Dining Listings
- Event Calendar
- Musicians Showcase
- In Tune
- Music Review
- Bruce James
- Guest Sports
- Harry King

Cartoons

- Editorial
- Orval
- This Modern World

### Drama over laughs

Jim Harris  
Updated: 5/3/2007  
'Bertrand Priest'

Arkansas Repertory Theatre

April 29

"Bertrand Priest," the new production at the Rep, has a cool, off-Broadway feel to it. We gathered from overhearing some of the comments of the local audience after Sunday night's performance that it might better be suited to the New York crowd who can better relate to such characters as the bombastic Brooklyn producer and the free-spirit psychics who hang out in Greenwich Village.

The play, written by New Yorker Ian Cohen, won the Rep's 2006 Kaufman and Hart Prize for New American Comedy. As Rep goers have found, winning that prize doesn't mean you're in for seeing a laugh-riot. "Bertrand Priest" is more dramatic and sentimental than it is funny, but it's wonderfully written with lines from a present-day setting that reflect the past; the play's last lines are simply perfect in their irony. And Matt Walker, as Brooklyn producer Al Steinberg, is downright funny just in his guffawing laugh late in the 85-minute one-act. But we also hear Josie DiVincenzo's Katrina Chernov, the spiritualist who talks with her snake, repeat the line "Remind me to tell you about that some time" so many times, the laughs for it by the end are for its turned-cheesy style.

Producer Steinberg and actor Dennis Kennedy (Eric Martin Brown, who reminded us of Johnny Drama in "Entourage" in his New Yorker style and his hopes of finding work) open the play at the table of a diner, Al chomping away at a corned beef while Dennis figures a way to ask his old friend, who he hasn't seen in five years, to loan him the money to pay a group trying to put on a play by Bertrand Priest.

We also venture back into the past, in Katrina's bedroom, where she and a young man (Mark Fisher, who spends most of his time in boxers) whom she wants to rename Bertrand Priest talk about his destiny: Should he work for his blue-collar dad in New Jersey or follow his dream and talents as a writer? The interplay from both settings is interrupted repeatedly by a video newscast above them that tells of Bertrand Priest's tragic end — in various ways, and a couple of times at Dennis' hand. These are Katrina's dreams.

In the present, Dennis speaks of a spiritual hand guiding him to this new play, and to even meeting Al for lunch. In the past, Katrina and her pet snake work at guiding "Bertrand" to his destiny, though what that is Katrina's not sure.

Mike Nichols again makes great use of limited space for the sets conveying past and present. Director Brad Mooy has four talented stars in which to convey the message of destiny and dreams, how meetings may not be simply happenstance, and how one decision can change them. Mooy's selection of music was downright thrilling, especially the piece that leads into the beginning of the play.

It's plenty to think about and enjoy.

— Jim Harris

[Print This Article](#) | [Email Article Link](#)

### Comments From Readers

[Post a Comment](#)

Contact

Subscriptions

- Paper
- Email News

XML RSS Feeds

Now More Arkansas Times Blogs!

### mortgage rates

<b>Option ARM</b>	360 Months	1.000%
<b>5/1 Libor Arm</b>	360 Months	6.250%
<b>3/1 Libor ARM</b>	360 Months	6.125%
<b>15 Year Fixed</b>	180 Months	6.375%
<b>30 Year Fixed</b>	360 Months	6.500%
<b>FHA 30 Year Fixed</b>	360 Months	6.500%
<b>Jumbo</b>	360 Months	6.750%
<b>10 year IO, 20 year fixed</b>	360 Months	6.750%

[Apply for your loan now!](#)

rates sponsored by  
Get the best rate  
and lowest payment  
with ENG Lending!

[A division of the Bank of England](#)



Media Partner of  
Arkansas Times

MANY HOSPITALS  
HAVE A SPECIAL  
PROCEDURE  
FOR HEART  
TRANSPLANTS.

THEY SEND THEM  
TO US.

The logo for Baptist Health Heart Center, featuring a green cross icon and the text "Baptist Health HEART CENTER".

---

[Home](#) | [Blogs](#) | [What To Do](#) | [Movies](#) | [Restaurants](#) | [News](#) | [Entertainment](#) | © Copyright 2004-06. Arkansas Times. All Rights Reserved.

