



## REVIEW

### STAG AND DOE

**Genre:**

A comedy by Mark Crawford/Canada/2014

**Directed by:**

Jake La Jeunesse

**Reviewed by:**

Jim Birchall

# Stag and Doe – NZ premiere

On a sultry night at the end of summer, I went along to my first experience of a production at Howick Little Theatre. In a New Zealand premiere, Stag and Doe showcases the Canadian tradition of partners holding a fundraiser to set themselves up financially for the start their married lives.

A couple named Bonnie and Brad have a Stag and Doe planned, but run into issues with a married couple named Mandy and Rob who are at a loose end for a venue after their wedding reception tent blows down. They agree to share the local hall, but both couples are at each other's throats, the catering staff are in jail, and the reception subsequently is in disarray.

Nasty 'Bridezilla' Mandy, (played by the impressive Courtney Louise) is on the warpath after a few too many wines, and the fact her fiancé Rob has shifted his focus to Bonnie's

best friend, Dee, who just so happens to be his ex that he left standing at the altar some years previously.

The cast is made up of solid performers whose range extends to cross the comedy/drama divide. Tony Rahme who plays an embattled caterer, is a genuine scene-stealer with his comedic zeal.

Gentle comedy goes hand-in-glove with some touching moments, as the traditions of small town Canada collide with issues such as solo parenting, financial worries, and dealing with past heartbreak.

Stag & Doe has a light-hearted, genuine feel that doesn't impose itself on the audience-nor take itself too seriously, making it the perfect accompaniment to a night out on the eastside.

**Season: Feb 29 to March 21, 8pm**

**Matinees: March 1 & 8, 2pm**

**Web: [hlt.nz/stag](http://hlt.nz/stag)**