

Vi'Paino's Italian cuisine complements atmosphere

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COPY EDITOR

Since winter is here, Chicago won't be treating us friendly anymore. It can get angry and start weeping (raining) like a teenage girlfriend anytime it wishes. So we'd better be prepared for rain anytime. Last Wednesday was a fateful day when I was telling everyone around me to carry an umbrella as it will rain, but I forgot mine.

I was one happy girl, doing her winter shopping when all of a sudden rain started to pour. The nearest place for me to rescue myself was this Italian and German restaurant Vi'Paino. I am glad I didn't bring an umbrella along or else I would have been never able to come across this little wonderland in the town.

I have been around the city and tried many restaurants, but for me currently this is the coolest restaurant in town. A hip, interesting atmosphere with great tasting but inexpensively priced food. It's a self-service style place, which means you don't have to give tips. They make everything fresh, right in front of you, and then buzz you on a beeper when it is done. The bar is also self-serve and has everything any normal bar would, it's nice, but a little troubling how fast you can get a drink. If you don't drink then they also have lemon-mint fresh water, which is also self-serve. They have it in a big glass cooler, the only drawback about this complimentary drink is that there is no ice and a slow pour on the water.

I was there with a friend. I ordered Chicken Alfredo Pasta (\$9.95) and my friend ordered a Chicken Barbeque Pizza (\$9.95). The

pasta bowl was gigantic and cheesy and creamy and what-not. It was really tasty, had lots of fresh flavors especially the taste of garlic and green chili. It was 'happiness in bowl'. The pizza was okay, I would rate it 3 out of 5 because there was very little cheese and the sauce was too sweet for pizza—I thought would be a bit spicy. They have only one size for pizza and you can take your leftovers in a bag.

I will recommend you to go there and try their pasta and salad, as they are so delicious. I read many online reviews about it, they said the taste is bland and uninteresting, but again, they make your dish the way you ask them to make it. If you will ask them to put more flavor in it they will do it without taking extra charges.

For those of you who haven't been there yet, this is how it works: upon entering the front door, the host gives you a card and asks

if you have been to this place before or not. If you say "no," then the host will explain how it works. Then you go to different food stations and tap your card to purchase what you want: Salad, Pasta, Pizza, Soup, Dessert, etc. Then you go and sit, and wait for the buzzer to beep (which hardly takes 6-8 minutes.) When you are done eating, someone comes and takes your dirty dishes with a smiling face. You pay your bill, which has been charged on your credit card and you are good to go with free gummy bears waiting for you next the cashier.

Two things I really enjoyed, the flavored water and the gummy bears by the cashier. I LOVE gummy bears and fresh water! The restaurant is located on 2577 N Clark St. Chicago, IL 60614 and the times are 11:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. on weekdays and 11:00 a.m. to midnight on weekends.

Retro Review:

Find an honest-to-goodness romance in 'Before Sunrise'

August Lysy
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The best of movies remind us of life's beauty: they not only communicate the human condition but lift our spirits above the morass of daily life to show us a glimpse of hope and love. Richard Linklater's "Before..." trilogy—"Before Midnight" being the latest—are exceptional examples of just such movies, and over the next three weeks I will review each in turn.

"Before Sunset," the first of the trilogy, premiered in 1995. It follows Jesse and Celine (Ethan Hawke and Julie Delpy) over the course of less than a day: from their first meeting on a train in Europe, to the early

morning the following day. The story itself—as "plot"—defies concise synopsis because the story is not a "happening" or series of events, but merely an extended encounter between these two strangers. Ordinarily, this might raise concerns, on account it leaves a tremendous burden upon dialogue and character development—two elements most Hollywood films notoriously lack serious concern for.

Fortunately, "Before Sunrise" is not a "Hollywood" movie. Linklater and Kim Krizan—the screenwriters—craft an exceptional script that translates beautifully in Hawke and Delpy's performances. The movie is virtually 90 minutes of Hawke and Delpy on screen talking and walking around Vienna—and, yes, they're falling in love (more on this below).

What do they talk about? Everything: life and death, sex and marriage, gender and identity, the past and future, family and friends—their conversations lack nothing of substance. The remarkable part of their conversations is that they are sincere and heartfelt—totally absent of the typical superficial Hollywood tropes and clichés. And what this amounts to is absolute committal on the part of the viewer: you fall in love with both of these characters because you actually come to know them—not in a sentimental schmaltzy way, but in a romantic way and with a surprising intellectual intimacy.

Moreover, what truly captivates you is the unmistakable chemistry between Hawke and Delpy. Unlike Hollywood "Romances" where you must abandon reality in a fantasy world in order to believe the "love" between the

characters, "Before Sunrise" requires no such sacrifice; rather, Hawke and Delpy literally woo you from the screen, until, at the end, you find yourself pining—pinning! —For their love and its endurance.

I have never experienced a romantic love, and for long want of it, I dare say many (myself included) doubt its very existence: perhaps it's all but a fancy, paraded before us to capitalize (literally) upon our longstanding fantastic delusions!

But—no! "Before Sunrise" gives me hope. With its honest dialogue and unpretentious portrayal of human interaction, I revive my faith and hold out hope for just such a romance. "Before Sunrise" is romance portrayed in actuo.

Eclectic Theatre's 'All My Sons' a faithful, impressive performance

August Lysy
STAFF WRITER

With a poster exhibiting a grayed-out, bisected apple and three planes as pits, even before their impressive performance, Eclectic Theatre manages to capture the jaded disillusionment of Arthur Miller's "All My Sons."

The war is over for America, but for the Kellers the loss of their son Larry still hovers over their conscious. At least that is the case for Kate (Julie Partyka), who refuses to acknowledge her son's death, choosing instead to desperately put her faith in both astrology and God. Meanwhile, Joe (David Elliott) and Chris (Jeff Kurysz) accommodate her monomania as they try to move on. Three years have passed since Larry's death when the issue is unavoidably raised by a visit from his ex-girlfriend Ann (Tracey Green) and her brother George (Charlie Rasmann). Last night lightning struck down Larry's memorial tree, and this signifies a bad omen for all involved.

Eclectic Theatre's rendition of "All My Sons," to my great surprise and appreciation,

adheres to the realism of Miller's text, eschewing the seemingly all-too-popular trend of "updating" classic texts in attempt to reach contemporary audiences. Artistic Director of Eclectic Theatre and director of the production David Belew, while addressing this issue in the playbill, through his staging shows the audience that the context of a play does not need revision because it is the universal themes of the play that carry its relevancy through time. And who cannot relate to the themes of disillusionment, cowardice, and family lies?

But a play and its themes is nothing without the players to actualize the conception on stage: and Eclectic's cast of "All My Sons" does just that with great success. The star of the show—without a doubt—is Julie Partyka, who plays Kate. From the moment she enters the stage, hounding Joe about her potato bag, we see her haggard appearance weighed down by years of grief and hear that same exhaustion in her weary voice. Her performance is terrifyingly beautiful to behold.

What comes out most in Partyka's performance is just how much control she

wields over the family. Reading "All My Sons," one is inclined to see the orchestrator as Joe (Elliott), but Belew's staging shows him as a hollowed-out husk of a man from beginning to end. David Elliott's lack of dynamic may perhaps be a stylistic choice, but as Joe Keller is a man desperate to keep the past in oblivion, his apparent lack of urgency registers discordance to the piece as a whole and renders his character arc rather flat and uninteresting.

Jeff Kurysz and Charlie Rasmann as Chris and George, respectively, the most opposing character-types in the play—the all-American golden boy and the emotionally-beleaguered son—capture the antithetical essence of their characters and work well together to turn the plot in the second act.

The supporting cast ought not to be overlooked, either. Beautifully subtle performances abound, especially with Patrick Iven and Kevin Webb; the former delivering the most understatedly poignant moment of the play in his monologue on lost idealism. Amy Gorelow and Nancy Kolton are no less impressive, although their presences are quite

fleeting; Gorelow as Lydia and Rasmann as George share a superb moment in the second act in which Gorelow's facial responses are remarkable in their genuineness. And—one cannot forget little Bert, played by Connor Boyle, who, of course, steals the stage whenever he's on it.

By the end of the second act, I found myself more moved by the expectation of what was to come than by the actual staging, which might be due to Elliott's low emotional arc and how quickly Kate and Chris seem to recover from the shock of the horrifying event. Nevertheless, Eclectic Theatre's "All My Sons" is filled with powerful moments of impressive acting and is well worth seeing: Highly Recommended.

This review is based upon a Preview showing. "All My Sons" is playing from October 25th – November 17th at the Athenaeum Theatre, located at 2936 N. Southport, near the Brown Line Wellington station.

For tickets call the theatre at (773) 935-6875, or go to Eclectic-Theatre.com.

Tech[nology]News:

New improvements, issues with Windows 8.1

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Windows has recently unveiled their newest release to the Windows 8 line. 8.1 is an update, not an upgrade. Almost all of the previous features unique to Windows 8, such as the Metro start screen and app store have been updated, and now includes Bing Smart Search. Apps can now be snapped to have up to 4-way multitasking, compared to the limit of 2 from Windows 8. Windows 8.1 introduces many new customizable features lacking from the original Windows 8 release.

First off, I have been using Windows 8 since its first developer's release. It has

certainly come a long way since that first buggy release, but it is still far from what I would consider perfected. Microsoft has done a great job improving the boot time over older versions of Windows. An added solid state drive makes it possible to cold boot in a matter of seconds.

The direction that they are taking Windows is much more mobile, with touch-oriented hardware. Unfortunately though, the shift toward mobile takes away from some of the features appreciated by the desktop crowd. One of the features that desktop lovers could not stand about the old Windows 8 was the lack of the start button, and even beyond that the lack of the Windows 7 style start menu.

The 8.1 update put the start button back, but it only opens the Metro interface and

is thus merely a cosmetic change. On a desktop, this screen is hard to navigate with a mouse alone. The only way to scroll through all the apps on this screen is to either grab the slider bar at the bottom and move the screen over or use the keyboard. For heavy mouse users this is more of a hassle than it should be.

With this new tiled start screen, users lose the option to directly open recently saved documents. Along the same lines, Windows 8.1 has many menus activated by moving a mouse into a corner. However, for multiple monitor setups, this becomes a problem. With multiple monitors, if a mouse is moved toward a corner, then the cursor might jump to the next screen and the corner menu won't be activated. For most of these screens, there are keyboard shortcuts, but to be honest,

most people can't recognize shortcuts beyond cut and paste.

This is not to say that 8.1 is without great improvements. The start time is amazing compared to 7. Plus, it is a bit faster overall. This is done by optimizing the operating system, especially because the operating system is also made for lower powered and slower mobile systems.

Compared to the initial release of Windows 8, 8.1 has many updates that make it faster and more secure, therefore it is a no-brainer to upgrade.

In the future, I hope that Microsoft will consider some of the problems brought up, even if they are very minuscule, and that might be enough to get me to make the switch from Windows 7.