Little House on the Ferry

November 7, 2011 By Oriol R. Gutierrez Jr.

I recently had the privilege of seeing *Little House on the Ferry*, a new off-Broadway show that follows a group of gay men during a summer weekend on Fire Island. For anyone who's ever visited or even just heard tell, it succeeds in capturing the essence of the place.

This lighthearted and entertaining musical stars former adult film actor and current singer extraordinaire Colton Ford, who plays a muscle boy named Max. The show marks his first appearance in a musical.

At the core, it's a love story -- a triangle actually -- between Randall, his older boyfriend Timothy and his ex-boyfriend Jake, who still pines for Randall all these years later. Other characters include the Latino Fire Island newbie Antonio and the been-there-done-that of the group Donnie.

We learn early on that Donnie's partner passed away a long time ago. We don't know exactly why or how his partner died, but a song Donnie sings mentions that HIV affected his life. It's almost a passing reference, but that's what I found so refreshing.

Is Donnie HIV positive? Was Donnie's partner's death related to HIV/AIDS? One is left with that impression, although it's not overtly expressed. And that's OK with me. Kudos to the producer Robert Gould, who also co-wrote the script and music, for not forgetting HIV.

At the risk of repeating myself, I am impressed that HIV was mentioned, especially at a time when it too often seems to me that HIV is left out of the gay conversation. This show proves that it doesn't take much to include HIV in a way that doesn't get in the way.

The show is playing at the Chernuchin Theater at 314 W. 54th St. (between 8th and 9th Avenues) in Manhattan through November 20th.

Go to littlehouseontheferry.com for more information.

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