



What Is It Good For?



IT CAN'T BE EASY being Kirk Lynn. The enterprising member of Austin, Texas', Rude Mechanicals took on the task of adapting a popular but prickly Internet comic into a freewheeling stage production. But as fans of David Rees' scathing, profanely hilarious "Get Your War On" know, the 'net strip uses clip art of office drones riding the white-water rapids of the current political situation, from 9/11 (in response to which the strip was launched) to the war in Iraq to White House policy to Thomas L. Friedman's op-ed pieces in the New York Times. Not a dynamic skeleton on which to build a flesh-and-blood presentation. Lynn spoke about the joy and heartbreak of mounting "Get Your War On," which is at the Woolly Mammoth Theatre through Oct. 14.

» **EXPRESS:** What's funny about the strip is that it's so static, but the ideas are so lively. Where did you begin?_» **LYNN:** Yeah, well, a sort of series of mistakes, basically. What we really admired as fans was that [Rees] uses clip art and the way he works with and against that. So we realized that every time an actor sat down at a desk, we sort of lost energy. Even if it's passionate and emotional, I feel like, if the actors feel a lot of emotion, then they're feeling it for

you._How much writing did you do?

It's probably 90 percent [Rees'] words. We sort of put a clock on the strips and sometimes we give a little bit of background ... so we'll remind the audience that Tony Blair said this today and then we'll go into the strip.

» **EXPRESS:** The characters are all opinion, no personality; did you give them any?_» **LYNN:** We tried not to. We hope that we don't embody the characters in any way. Some of the weirdest fan mail [Rees] gets is people saying, "White standing clip-art dude said this in week three, but in week seven ..."

» **EXPRESS:** How did it get cast?_» **LYNN:** I hate to say the word organic, but first we read the strips aloud to each other. I don't think it was ever close in terms of which people in the company were sitting around a table.

» **EXPRESS:** Do you expect to change minds?_» **LYNN:** I grew up Southern Baptist, and most sermons are preaching to the choir, and it feels good to hear those views. Especially in Austin, this liberal enclave in the red state. It was nigh hysterical — just the other day we were like, even where the polls are right now, Bush says, "But I need to do this domestic surveillance," and we were like, "What, are you crazy?"

» [Woolly Mammoth Theatre](#), 641 D St. NW; through Oct. 14, \$24-\$32; 202-393-3939. (Gallery Place-Chinatown)

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