

LOS ANGELES  
THEATRE SCENE  
BY ROB STEVENS

**MYSTERY PUZZLER**

Sam Bobrick's new play, *ARE YOU SURE?*, at the Back Alley Theatre is a sly, witty, mystery puzzle that keeps you laughing while you try to guess "what will happen next?" The two main characters are Caroline, a wealthy woman, and David, her third husband. Is he really trying to kill her, or drive her insane, or is she already insane? The play is a series of scenes which usually end with a new murder, but each time the relationships shift. Charlie is Caroline's deceased second husband, then he is a police detective, then a deranged murderer. Young Stephanie is her daughter, then a rival for her husband then a sexy maid named Marie. There is also an older version of Marie who is sometimes Caroline's mother. Simon is Caroline's first husband but then her father. It is a slight, but funny, premise. Director Allan Miller keeps the madcap action flowing and the playing of the cast is well tuned, especially Lois Nettleton as Caroline and Jeffrey Haddow as Charlie. Their scenes together are the best, their sense of style is flawless. Ellen Maxted makes a sexy flirt and good support is also offered by Jack Collins and Catherine McLeod. Ronny Cox is a bit too stiff for the lightness of the material, perhaps more playing time will ease his starch. (Back Alley Theatre, 15231 Burbank Blvd. in Van Nuys. Thurs.-Sun. until March 27. 780-2240).

*ARE YOU SURE?* (photo by Ed Krueger)

