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### One Woman's Contemplating *The Girl That I Marry*

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Elaine St. George.  
Photo: Carol Rosegg

Here's some advice for those people celebrating the end of "Gay Pride Week" this weekend: conserve just a bit of energy so that you can enjoy Elaine St. George's breezy trip through the great American songbook "The Girl That I Marry." It plays two final performances at the Peter Sharp Theater at Playwrights Horizons next Monday night.

In "Girl", St. George has chosen 21 songs ranging from "Old Fashioned Love" (1923) to "Love Who You Love (from *A Man of No Importance* in 2002) and loosely tied them together with comic commentary about the issue of gay marriage, and later, a loving tribute to her partner of eight years. (St. George says that they've been sporting the jewelry – meaning a ring – for four).

The singer's irreverent patter works nicely for the most part and can amuse (mom and dad using the savings account they started for her wedding to buy themselves a Mercedes). What's more terrific is St. George's exquisite delivery of the songs in this "out and proud" piece. She can be blues-y and soulful ("Legalize My Name" from *St. Louis Woman*); impish (a clever arrangement of "Get Me to the Church on Time" from "My Fair Lady" and "Not Getting Married Today" from *Company*, and bawdy ("Old Fashioned Love Story" from Andrew Lippa's *The Wild Party*). In the "Church/Married" section, St. George doesn't miss a beat as she switches between the two numbers. In "Story", St. George delivers the comic piece nearly as well as Alix Korey, who originated the tune. St. George also possesses a gorgeous

soprano that is heard at its best in a heartfelt and soaring rendition of "So Many People" by Sondheim.

Musical director Janice Friedman on piano and Adam Armstrong on bass provide just the right backup for St. George and these songs as they celebrate (and gently tease) the institution of marriage and being in love. The two musicians move easily between the historical periods and styles of these songs, never intruding on the star of the evening St. George. Somehow I think if they could get a permanent space for "The Girl That I Marry", it might become the spot for proposals that precede (at least for the gay folks in the audience) a trip to Massachusetts.

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Performances of "The Girl That I Marry" continue next Monday, June 28 at 7 and 9:30pm at the Peter Jay Sharp Theater at Playwrights Horizons (416 West 42nd Street). Tickets are \$30 and can be purchased by calling 212-279-4200.

-- **Andy Propst**