



**EVEN BETTER THIS 'TIME':** (left to right) Laura Linney, Brian D'Arcy James, Eric Bogosian, Christina Ricci in *Time Stands Still*. Photo: Joan Marcus

### *Theater Review*

**Tony-nominated drama even better  
the second 'Time' around**

## ***Time Stands Still***

**Written by Donald Margulies**

**Directed by Daniel Sullivan**

**Cort Theatre**

**138 West 48th Street**

**(212-239-6200), [www.timestandsstillonbroadway.com](http://www.timestandsstillonbroadway.com)**

**By Scott Harrah**

Relationships and the ongoing conflict in the Middle East are two thought-provoking themes in Pulitzer Prize-winner Donald Margulies' Tony-nominated drama, *Time Stands Still*, which just re-opened after a successful run last spring. The story of angst-ridden New Yorkers is actually even better and more powerful the second time around. Laura Linney brilliantly portrays war photojournalist Sarah Goodwin as a high-strung woman who is torn between her nearly nine-year relationship with boyfriend James Dodd (Brian D'Arcy James) and returning to her dangerous job after nearly being killed by a suicide bomber in the Middle East.

Linney injects her character with a whiny sensibility that doesn't always make her sympathetic to audiences, but that's obviously the playwright's intent. However, Linney has really grown into the role since the play debuted earlier this year, and her performance is incandescent throughout the show. Sarah thinks she's altruistic, but her career motives appear hollow and selfish.

Christina Ricci, taking over the role originated by Alicia Silverstone, is electrifying as event planner Mandy Bloom, the girlfriend of Sarah's editor, Richard Erlich (Eric Bogosian). Although Ms. Ricci doesn't have the natural naïveté of Ms. Silverstone, she's still thoroughly convincing, and makes the part her own. When Sarah first meets Mandy, she says the woman is "embryonic." Sarah thinks Mandy is too young and vapid for the intellectual Richard. As the tale progresses, however, Ms. Ricci's Mandy displays a wide range of maturity and emotions that prove she's hardly some airhead. Ms. Ricci's intricate execution of Mandy's character arc is always engrossing. In early scenes, she politely puts up with Sarah's digs at her, but Ms. Ricci shows what a great actor she is when she breaks down and lashes back.

On the surface, Sarah and James seem to have a great relationship. James is a freelance writer who's content to nurse Sarah back to health and hopes she won't return to her career so the two of them can have a normal life together in Brooklyn. Richard and Mandy look mismatched because of their age differences, but we learn that there's genuine love between them, while Sarah and James' partnership is becoming strained. It is remarkable how the men interact with the needs of the women in their lives here. Brian D'Arcy James gives a first-rate portrait of James as a caring man who only wants the best for Sarah. Eric Bogosian is in equal good form as Richard, who is doing everything to make things with Mandy work.

*Time Stands Still* could have been another prosaic drama about bickering couples,

but Daniel Sullivan deftly directs the outstanding cast, making it well worth a second look.

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