

Theatre

The Sea Horse

Theatre at Muddy's, February 12

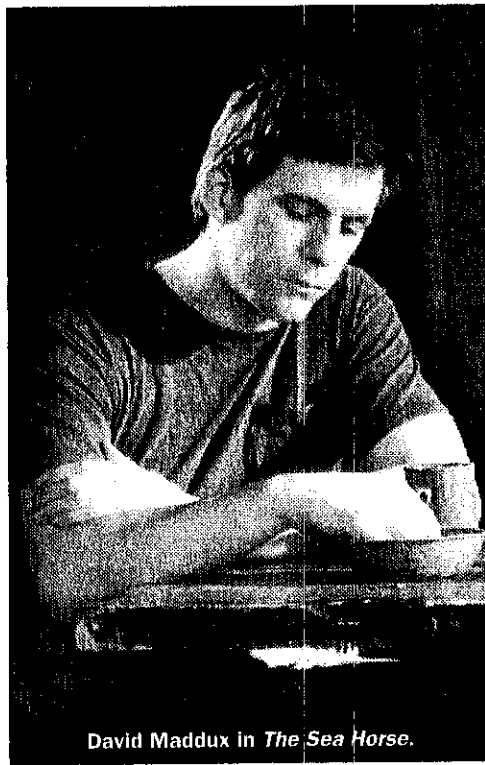
If you're someone who's never won the lottery of love, but you still play no matter how grim the odds — well, keep trying. You never know when your luck might change.

Certainly the characters in Edward J. Moore's *The Sea Horse* didn't expect to hit the jackpot. Gertrude Blum (played by Connie Sander, who also directs the show) is the salty proprietor of a seaside tavern. She carries plenty of weight (literally) and knows how to throw it around. Hiding behind a wit akin to Roseanne Arnold's, Blum prides herself on being independent. When the handsome, charming Harry Bales (David Maddux) jaunts into her life, we know it's her lucky day — if only she would admit it!

While the plot probably won't win kudos for originality, what makes *The Sea Horse* worthwhile is the well-developed, interesting characters, and the crisp, often humorous dialogue. Sander and Maddux succeed in endearing Blum and Bales to the audience almost immediately. We want them to fall in love and live happily ever after. We want the fairy tale ending, even if only to remind us that true love *is* possible.

The intimate story is perfectly complemented by the cozy Theatre at Muddy's, where the show runs through March 26. Black-box theater at its best, the set places the action in our laps, even as the characters place themselves in our hearts.

Debra Jennings



David Maddux in *The Sea Horse*.