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Jason Evans and Rob Reese are two of the four members of the excellent improv troupe Amnesia Wars. Their new show is the launch of their new two-man comedy team, which they describe as "Like the Smothers Brothers, but without the music; like Cheech and Chong, but with the drugs; like Nichols and May, but without Nichols, or May."

Performances are free; the Parkside Lounge asks for a 2-drink minimum



If I had the time, I'd become a Rob Reese groupie. This young actor-teacher-director-playwright, who is probably best-known as head honcho of the Amnesia Wars improv troupe, consistently turns out challenging, adventurous, entertaining work in all sectors of the theatre. This time around, he's paired with Jason Evans (also of Amnesia Wars) to create the aptly-named comedy duo *Evans/Reese*.

Their promising partnership debuts with three free shows at The Parkside Lounge.

If the first one is any indication—and I'm certain that it is—these two guys are definitely onto something. Evans and Reese have terrific chemistry and, more important, have that weird simpatico synergy that guarantees that one knows what the other one's thinking at almost every moment. The result is sharp, funny improvised comedy that scores about two-thirds of the time. The advertisements for the show invoke the names of Nichols and May, which turns out to be not mere hubris at all: in terms of intelligence and consistent comic value, *Evans/Reese* are more than worthy successors of those legendary figures.

The show consists of bits, all created off the cuff, that wrap around each other, starting and stopping as inspiration comes and go. At the performance reviewed, subjects included a crashing space shuttle, an odd romantic flirtation between strangers who meet on line at the bank, and—most hilariously—Reese's abortive attempts to relate an anecdote from his temp job, downtown, earlier that day. At best, the banter is so clever and assured that it sounds scripted, which is meant entirely as a compliment. The evening concludes, impressively, with simultaneous dual rants, on subjects suggested by the audience, in the middle of which Evans and Reese switch topics. It's a great finish.

Evans/Reese is grand fun; somebody's eventually going to discover just how brilliant these guys are and put them on TV or in the movies, so we should appreciate them while they're still working for free on Houston Street. (reviewed on January 3, 2002)