

# Adult Comedy At Lab Theater

by Di Saggau

**W**e've all met them, self-involved do-gooders who spend their days protesting cause after cause just to fill their own egos. *The Altruists*, a play by Nicky Silver, is now showing at Laboratory Theater of Florida and it centers in on four such characters, plus one unsuspecting boyfriend. The show is snarky, naughty and funny with adult language, sexual situations and partial nudity. In other words, don't bring the kids.

This is a very funny play and the cast does a marvelous job of portraying these misfits. Lucy Harris is Sydney, a shallow soap opera actress who subsidizes the group. She's a pill-popping neurotic who is terrified of growing old and fat. Harris shines in the role, which demands a lot of dialogue. Her one-sided rant at the sleeping form in her bed is brilliantly funny.

Sydney's brother Ronald is a social worker and he is played by Scott Carpenter, who is perfectly cast. He had me laughing out loud as he tries to find true love with a young street-smart prostitute named Lance, played by Joseph Yazvac. His character isn't very likable at the start of the play, but one sure feels empathy for him toward the end. And he's the only one with principles. Then there is Ethan, Sydney's non-committal boyfriend, played by Val White, and Tera Nicole Miller as Cybil, a protestor who



**Lucy Harris as Sydney**

can't ever remember what she's protesting.

The setting is three apartments in New York City. The action moves from one to the other through well-lit scenes as we learn more about each character. All but Lance were brought up in a well-to-do household. The characters are self-involved and hypocritical, and they are also very, very funny. Sydney has committed a felony and faces a life in prison if caught. Ethan and the others realize they need to keep her out of prison, not because they care about her (they don't) but because her conviction would mean the end of the gravy train. These laughable characters then commit an act that is so unforgiving, we see them for who they truly are. Directed by James Recca, *The Altruists* runs through March 8 at Laboratory Theater of Florida, located at 1634 Woodford Avenue in Fort Myers. For tickets, go to [www.laboratorytheater-florida.com](http://www.laboratorytheater-florida.com) or call 218-0481.✧