

Editor's Picks: Sam Hurwitt, January-February 2012

by / [Sam Hurwitt](#)



Carrie Paff and John Bogar in *Double Indemnity*. Photo: Chris Bennion.

Double Indemnity

San Jose Repertory Theatre

Jan. 12–Feb. 5

James M. Cain's "Double Indemnity" is hailed as a noir classic, but like several of the prolific author's other works (including "Mildred Pierce" and "The Postman Always Rings Twice"), it's better known for the movie it inspired than for the 1935 novella itself. And understandably so: with a snappy adaptation by Raymond Chandler and director Billy Wilder and fantastic performances by Fred MacMurray, Barbara Stanwyck and Edward G. Robinson, the 1944 film is a treasure. But there's more than one way to tell Cain's hard-boiled tale of an insurance salesman seduced by a femme fatale into helping kill her husband for a substantial insurance payout—and in fact, the film took substantial liberties with the original story. Now San Jose Rep unveils a new theatrical adaptation by David Pichette and R. Hamilton Wright in a world premiere coproduction with Seattle's A Contemporary Theatre, which got it first in October. The latter company's artistic director, Kurt Beattie, helms the production, with Carrie Paff as the steamy dame, John Bogar as her conspirator, and Richard Ziman as the claims adjuster handling the case. Jessica Martin and Mark Anderson Phillips round out the cast. Visit sjrep.com.