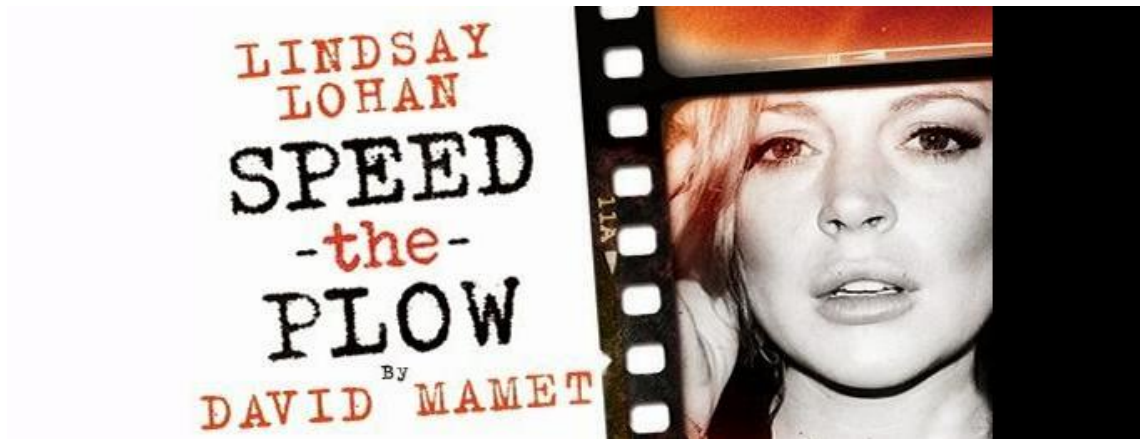


Review of Speed-the-Plow, starring Lindsay Lohan



The new theatrical season has just begun in London and its venues are boiling in excitement over it. On top of some of its –already- classics like *Les Misérables*, *The Lion King* or *Billy Elliot*, autumn 2014 comes packed with new shows that will keep Leicester Square and its surroundings as busy as usual. British actress Kristin Scott Thomas is bringing to live Electra's drama, taking over from Kevin Spacey and his successfully experience at The Old Vic earlier this year. But she's not the only international name on the posters. The return of the Cornwall born actress has somehow been overshadowed by a certainly controversial presence on the West End: Lindsay Lohan.

Former Disney star has just made her debut in theatre on an adaptation of David Mamet's Hollywood satire *Speed-the-Plow*. From now and until the end of November, the Playhouse Theatre will host her and co-stars Nigel Lindsay and Richard Schiff running on a Monday to Saturday schedule. What could look as another show on the European hottest hub of theatre has however turned into a major subject of discussion. Lindsay Lohan has been on the tabloid press for years, feeding newspapers with stories that had few or nothing to do with her career as an actress. It's not surprising then that her return to acting has raised so much interest. Reporters were eager to see with their own eyes if she can actually deliver, to check if there's anything left of her childish talent. From *The Times* to *The Guardian*, *The Sun* or *The Daily Mail*, dozens of columnists has been dissecting the pre-opening shows.

A big failure was expected. Some people even dared to predict an epic disaster on the opening night. For the sake of director Lindsay Posner and all the people working behind the stage, nothing went wrong. Or at least not that wrong. Even if Lohan is nothing but the third wheel on the play, all eyes were on her. Her performance was described as an average attempt, not remarkable at all and absolutely forgettable. Critics though had to admit they had gone too far on their predictions. Their expectations were so low that Lindsay Lohan being actually able to play her role without too much of trouble sounded for them as an accomplishment. On Thursday 2nd October by 9.30 pm the crowd gathered in the Playhouse Theatre made their way to the street sighing of relief... and resignation. The bad girl hadn't mess up. Or at least that

was what she claimed in the after-party at One Whitehall Place. Other voices pointed out that awkward moment when she stood silent in a long pause and needed a prompt.

Leaving aside the media storm around *Speed-the-Plow*, this play can be a good excuse for a night out. This particular version of the Broadway show starring Madonna is the story of Hollywood studios seen from the inside. The critical approach is channeled in sarcastic dialogues between the male characters Bobby and Charlie, both working for a film production company and looking for the next big thing that brings them professional recognition and... money. Because in *Speed-the-Plow* everything is about money. Bobby and Charlie have no moral, no principles. Or, just as Groucho Marx said, if someone doesn't like them, they have others. Lindsay Lohan –aka Karen- is the attractive temporary secretary who will threaten their success. She will inspire Bobby a new approach to the business, much idealistic and less profit-motivated. In exchange of a role in his new production. The three of them are nothing but an illusion. Their words are inspired by ambition, there's no room in their speeches for feelings, dreams or personal commitment. Naïve Karen turns out to be another girl looking for the American dream and willing to do anything to reach it. Bobby and Charlie, both mates and competitors, have even forgotten what to make a really good film means.

Confrontation, aliens and sex are the main ingredients of their recipe. Not far from what *Speed-the-Plow* has to offer. Couldn't this be a case of meta-theatre?

Lindsay Lohan's debut on the West End is much ado about nothing.