

FRONT & CENTER

■ MINNEAPOLIS, MARIN, CALIF., AND INDIANAPOLIS

Interpretive Dance



Mary Vreeland and Cathleen Riddley in *Love Person*, directed by Gia Forakis at Marin Theatre Company in California.

ED SMITH

HEART-POUNDING ATTRACTION, intense all-night conversations—Aditi Brennan Kapil's *Love Person* captures the giddiness of new love affairs. But the play is even more eloquently realistic about the wear and tear that time wreaks on relationships. The story focuses on two couples: Free and Maggie, and Vic and Ram. Free is a deaf woman who communicates through American Sign Language; Maggie, a professor, delights in the lyricism of signing but doesn't share the isolation it creates for her longtime partner. After Free meets Ram (her needy sister Vic's latest fling), she gets into an online debate with him about the nature of translation. Though based on a misunderstanding, their conversation becomes a lifeline to both—even as it complicates the chemistry between Vic and Ram and accentuates the rift between Free and Maggie. Will it end in heartbreak or happily ever after? Kapil's characters reach neither predictable shore, but in the simple word "continue," they find hope. "I think compromise is gorgeous,"

the playwright declares. "The fact that love makes us compromise is immense."

After productions this year at Minneapolis's **Mixed Blood Theatre** and California's **Marin Theatre Company**, the third installment of *Love Person*'s National New Play Network premiere runs July 24–Aug. 16 at the **Phoenix Theatre** in Indianapolis. (Next season brings productions at **Live Girls!** in Seattle and **Victory Gardens Theater** in Chicago.) The script poses considerable challenges, including projected e-mails, Sanskrit recitations and entire scenes of silence as Free and Maggie's hands move expressively in argument and reminiscence. Though Kapil isn't proficient in ASL, she has written it like a fifth character into the play. "There are multiple strands of meaning at play at all times, and who you are—whether you hear, don't hear, know ASL, know English, know both—all of that will inform your experience," says Kapil. "It is a show that lives in both languages, just as the characters do." —Nicole Estvanik