

The Parrot

BY **ANDY PROPST** | FEBRUARY 17, 2004 9:00 PM



Presented by the Flea Theater and the Talking Band at the Flea Theater, 41 White St., NYC, Feb. 5-22.

Must the princess always marry the prince just because he presents himself to her? The answer, of course, is no, and Paul Zimet and Ellen Maddow's beguiling musical, "The Parrot," reinforces that message for children and adults alike.

The first notes of Maddow's cunning score, a mixture of whimsy and urban edginess, set the tone as midteen Bela, played with charming pluck by Elizabeth Daniels, juggles calls on her cell phone while doing homework on her laptop. Outside, three parrots, mysteriously perched on the snow-covered tree beside her Queens apartment, squawk a serenade. (Renoly Santiago, Scott Blumenthal, and Steven Rosen are transformed into this well-sung chorus by Ralph Lee's fanciful masks.)