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'The Bard Gets Hard' new Rogue Shakespeare at the Hollywood Fringe

June 22, 2016

2:55 PM MST

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Press pictures for 'The Bard Gets Hard' (or 'Sweet Love Adieu') at the Hollywood Fringe. Lance Frantzich as Magistrate and Ryan J-W Smith as Sidney.

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Once again Ryan J-W Smith, Artistic Director of Rogue [Shakespeare](#), adapts Shakespeare into a comical farce for today's audience in his adaptation of Shakespeare's work at the Hollywood Fringe called "The Bard Gets Hard" (or "Sweet Love Adieu"). From the start the audience knows this is a play about love, as one line states to "fall for love is to beg for pain." The pain that this play causes results from laughter, as it takes on a ride of men trying to take what they want and women who want to be taken for love.

Perhaps the most significant message of this play rests in the actions of the characters trying to prevent a Lord Edmund played by Roger Carvalho from forcing his way onto his ward Anne (Katey Zouck). It should be a lady's choice. This comic piece reflects the traditional themes of honor and

shame in Shakespeare's plays "Much Ado About nothing" and forbidden love like "Romeo and Juliet", but it is neither story. It is a work on its own taking the style of Shakespeare but spinning it for a modern time.

Many people know Shakespeare, however his wife Anne not so much. It seems telling that the two leads of this play are Anne and William played by Jason Linforth. In fact knowing this now one might want to see the play again. At one point the line is given "author of this manuscript is I."

Other characters to this comedy include Anne's ladies in waiting, Audrey played by Faith Kearns, and Faith played by Megan Barker. William has his partners in crime as well Latimer played by Ryan Stiffelman, and Lance Frantzich as Ridley. Frantzich also plays a Doctor, Magistrate and Priest. Smith the creator of this piece, plays Lord Edmund's serving man Sidney.

This play has many of the devices used in the original romantic comedies of Shakespeare's times. Anne dresses as a boy. Latimer dresses as Anne to make an interesting twist on the Romeo and Juliet balcony scene. Jokes are made about priests and scandal. Swords and arguments come into play. The interplay of the men and women as friends reveal very long standing views on the relationships of both sexes to each other and among friends. Jokes are made about men and their view on women and women on their view of men. Another topic that underlies this performance, "to be a woman is difficult." Yet the play also shows the "power of women." Face it to be blunt, what Lord Edmund wants defined in one word is rape.

In the end like all good comedies there is a happy ending. The true heroism rests in the least suspect. As Smith states in his lines as Sidney "What they have in banks, we have in wits." The language of the play rings true for the audience of today, bringing in the concern of banks "funding off shore banks," and "the enemy within." "Revolution or random plot." All leading to the bad guy getting his. this play ends with this "kindle kindness now."

For more information about shows at the Fringe see the [Hollywood Fringe website](#). For future information about Rogue Shakespeare performances visit [their site](#).

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Laura Tull

LA Performing Arts Examiner

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