

NorthHollywood-TolucaLakePatch



Theater Review: 'Two Gentlemen of Chicago' at the Falcon Theatre - By Radomir Luza



Loosely based on William Shakespeare's 'Two Gentlemen of Verona,' this musical comedy incorporates the music of the pop/rock band Chicago.

It is especially in theatre that the unique gift of going from song to joke and back again is most coveted.

Nowhere is that more true than in The Troubadour Theater Company's production of *Two Gentlemen of Chicago* running through April 22 at The Falcon Theatre in Burbank.

Loosely based on William Shakespeare's *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, this musical comedy incorporates the music of the pop/rock band Chicago and some of Los Angeles' brightest talent including a nine piece band and acrobatics.

Learn more about the Falcon Theater in these previous stories:

[Falcon Theatre Celebrates 10th Anniversary](#)

[Falcon Theatre Brings Comedy, Musicals to Toluca Lake](#)

The Troubies, as they are affectionately called, indulge in everything from political satire (Mitt Romney) and entertainment humor (Mel Gibson) to

slapstick (a circus dog) in the story of friends Valentine and Proteus and their love and quest for the fair Silvia.

Rarely has such energy hit the stage at once. Not one performer here lacks comic timing or a musical gift. The writing is witty, magical and on the money, not to mention very funny.

The direction by Matt Walker is thoroughly affective, crisp and well-constructed. No one is out of place, and the chemistry and geometry on display are rare and terribly endearing.

Rob Nagle (Valentine) shines as the emotional, sensitive and somewhat foppish lover. Nagle's self-effacing humor and comic timing are top-notch. He is given some of the best one-liners in the show.

Matt Walker (Proteus) maintains a stage presence and relaxed sense of humor that mesh with Nagle and make the play the success that it is.

Morgan Rusler (Duke of Milan) is hilarious and very well cast.

Rick Batalla (Thurio) and Suzanne Jolie Narbonne (Ursula) bring levity and mood to the proceedings.

Monica Schneider (Silvia), Christine Lakin (Julia), Katie Nunez (Lucetta) and Lisa Valenzuela (Bruschetta) do not miss a beat and bring intensity and romance to the play.

But it is Beth Kennedy (Launce) and Matthew Morgan (Speed) that run away with "Chicago." Their interplay with the audience and sheer joy of performing are nothing less than electrifying.

The band, doling out such Chicago classics as "Wishing You Were Here," "If You Leave Me Now" and "Hard Habit to Break" is closely tied to the show comically and rhythmically.

Musical director Eric Heinly deserves kudos for the support his music gives the play as do lighting designer Jeremy Pivnick, sound designer Julie Ferrin and costume designer Sharon McGunigle.

The only fault here lies in not having enough of Shakespeare and too much of everything else. It sometimes seems as if Shakespeare's verse is an afterthought.

All in all, the charisma, charm and spontaneity of The Troubies make this boulevard easy to cross.