

ON STAGE LOS ANGELES

MONDAY, OCTOBER 14, 2013

Antaeus: Tangerines or Cherries?

The Liar, take two.

Tangerines and Cherries / Cherries and Tangerines? Not like apples and oranges but still a tough comparison. Antaeus does the Los Angeles theatre world a favor with their tradition of creating two complete casts for their productions. The chemistry of who plays what character and with whom is extremely interesting to watch and though comparisons are not all together a good idea, they are inevitable.

The Sunday matinee of **The Liar** came off beautifully timed and well acted, but with a slightly different energy. These are all professional actors. They are well rehearsed and meet the demands of text, which are considerable. Kudos again to director Casey Stangl. Traditionally, Antaeus creates names for their separate casts, but this time, it's a slightly jumbled mix and match of characters which meant that a couple of the actors from Thursday's opening night, Jules Wilcox (sexy Clarice) and Jonathon Lamer (bigger and crisper in his second shot at Philiste) came to play at the Sunday matinee.



Jules Willcox as Clarice, Ann Noble as Lucrece Photo by
Geoffrey Wade

David Evans' adaptation of Corneille's play is the key, of course. His purposeful doggerel works so very well. The brilliant script is contemporary and still maintains the flavor of the times, almost Shakespearean. He cribbs a bit from Hamlet here; a sonnet there, much to the delight of the audience. It is a play for lovers of the Theatre. The energy seldom flags.

A matinee somehow is not the same as an evening performance. It's the middle of the day. The words are all the same, though interpretations must vary to suit the individual actor. Where Bo Foxworth as Alcippe is compact and frenzied, Sunday's Alcippe, Joe Delafield is more rangy. He, too, is wild but obsessed in completely different way. As Lucrece, Ann Noble, is a ringer for her sister player, Joanna Strapp. Noble reminded me of Poison Ivy Rorschach of The Cramps. Strong choices. Brian Slaten's Cliton is barely triple digit IQ and at once a perfectly hip and happening narrator for the play. Graham Hamilton as Dorante approaches his Liar with great confidence. To be a master liar, you must have a great memory and his work is well done, even the forgetful parts.

Karen Malina White as the twins, Isabelle and Sabine, serving Clarice and Lucrece was slightly difficult to understand from time to time, but the delineation of the two disparate characters still worked. Antaeus staple, Robert Pine as Geronte, allowed his beats to syncopate from time to time but scored the only ovation on his exit from a complicated speech.

The matinee emerged from the same deep well of Casey Stangl's vivid imagination and holds up beautifully. It's impossible not to compare performances, one to another and impossible not to have a favorite or two. The upside is that whichever cast that you choose to see, and I recommend that anyone within the sound of my 'voice' must get to NoHo to see this show, laughs are guaranteed. The performances are so worth the effort that you must become another advocate for **The Liar**.

Which ever cast you choose, you'll leave the theater smiling and ready to tell a friend.

Pierre Corneilles's **THE LIAR**

"slapadapted" by David Ives

Antaeus Theatre Company

5112 Lankershim Boulevard

NoHo, CA 91601 (1 ½ blocks south of Magnolia)

Two casts Opens October 10, 2013

Continues Thursdays through Sundays

Closes December 1, 2013

Call theater or check website for specific casts, dates and times

www.Antaeus.org

818 506 1983

\$34.00 Top

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