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## Voelker Orth Welcomes 'Two Gentlemen'

Posted on August 21, 2014 by tribune in Leisure

On Aug. 13, the Hip to Hip Theatre Company's production of "Two Gentlemen of Verona" was performed in the garden of the Voelker Orth Museum in Flushing. The hilarious performance, which explored the themes of love and friendship, included masks, puns, slapstick and a human playing a dog (who is usually played by a dog).

The masks, which only covered the top half of the actors' faces, were from the tradition of commedia dell'arte farce, which features stock characters (lovers, elders and servants), and clownish exaggeration. In "Two Gentlemen," Proteus (Jonathan Dyrud) loves Julia (Joy Marr), and his friend Valentine (T.J. Gainley) loves Silvia (Lawryn Lacroix). Launce (Guy Ventolieri, who wore a harlequin outfit, a classic commedia dell'arte costume) loves his dog Crab (Drew Bloom, dressed in long, floppy ears and a canine snout). When Proteus sees Silvia, he falls in love with her too and tells her father about Valentine's plan to elope with her, hoping to get her himself. Before everything ends happily, Valentine is banished and, after being menaced by a group of three outlaws, bluffs his way into becoming their leader; Julia (disguised as a boy) becomes Proteus's servant, and has to deliver his gift to Silvia (who refuses it); and Launce takes the blame for Crab's peeing in the wrong place!

The many hilarious scenes (kudos to Carter Gill, the commedia consultant) included one in which Valentine takes forever to realize that the love letter he's holding is meant for him, and the many moments of miming by Bloom, as well as the interaction between him and the inventive Ventolieri. Marr, a founding member of the company, beautifully handled the dual role of Julia and her gender-bending disguise, Sebastian, while Lacroix was an excellent and elegant Silvia. Lucetta, a servant, was well-acted by Sarah Gwynne Walker, who also



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amusingly plays an outlaw, while versatile Amanda Thickpenny portrayed three parts: Panthino, an attendant; Eglamour, a gentleman; and an outlaw, while the third outlaw was humorously played by Cassie Alexander. A modern touch was added when Silvia's father, a Duke (Hip to Hip veteran Kurt Kingsley) is accompanied in one scene by Darth Vader's music from "Star Wars."

For more information about the company, go to [www.hiptohip.org](http://www.hiptohip.org). To vote for this show to win a New York Innovative Theatre Award, go to [www.nyitawards.com](http://www.nyitawards.com).

- Barbara Arnstein



8+1 0



Tagged Amanda Thickpenny Barbara Arnstein Carter Gill

- Cassie Alexander
- Crab Drew Bloom
- Darth Vader
- Kurt Kingsley
- Launce Guy Ventolieri
- music
- New York Innovative Theatre Award
- Proteus Jonathan Dyrud
- Sarah Gwynne Walker
- Star Wars
- Two Gentlemen
- Voelker Orth Museum



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