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Sly Fox a Vaudeville Romp at Town Hall Theatre

By Sophie Braccini



Clockwise from bottom left, Foxwell J. Sly (Clive Worsley), Simon Able (Dennis Markam), Lawyer Craven (Randy Anger), Jethro Crouch (Remi Barron), Abner Truckle (Justin DuPuis), and Simplicity Truckle (Molly Benson)

rehearsing the falls and special moves.

Oliver is known as a meticulous director who makes sure that every moment is earned. What the THT team presents is Vaudeville in the style of the Gold Rush era. The music incorporates banjo tunes and sea shanties. "We want to create a feel of old San Francisco," says Oliver.

There is not a minute of rest in the play. Five different sets designed by Mark Flynn are changed at lightning speed by the efficient crew. There are plans for a curtain to complete the stage, with short vignettes presented between the scenes by THT students, in the style of the period's performances.

Worsley plays the old miser Foxwell J. Sly, the central character of the play. Pretending to die, he leads the equally greedy characters to believe they will be his sole heir. As he extracts what he wants from them, he exposes their lowness, but will he go one trick too far and will justice triumph?

Worsley's trademark slapstick is at its best. He seems to enjoy himself enormously, jumping from half dead to boisterous, changing roles; he is at the top of his game as Sly. Dennis Markam as his servant, Simon Able, is totally up to the part. More bon vivant and naive than his master, he will try his luck at trickery, too.

The cast incorporates three young graduates from Town Hall Theatre Company's teen program who are very solid. A special mention goes to gifted and expressive comedian Justin DuPuis as Abner Truckle, the husband ready to sacrifice his wife to inherit riches.

Sly Fox will run from September 29 through October 20 with previews September 27 and 28, and a special Q&A with the cast and director on October 5. For more information and tickets go to www.TownHallTheatre.com.

Town Hall Theatre Company is opening its 2012/2013 season with a big laugh: Sly Fox - a very funny human comedy set in 19th century San Francisco and reminiscent of Comedia dell'Arte, with somewhat archetypal characters. The miser, the smart servant, the ingenue, the brave and virtuous soldier- all dance the ballet of the human comedy, with humor and lightness, yet still show how the obsessive pursuit of wealth can lead individuals to compromise their values and families.

Sly Fox is the farcical adaptation by Larry Gelbart of Ben Jonson's satiric play Volpone set in Renaissance Venice. The comedy is served by an appropriate cast, directed with precision by Soren Oliver.

"I wanted to find a play that would address the issue of greed, but with some humor," says THT Artistic Director Clive Worsley. "When I read the script I loved it, and decided it would be a great fit, and very timely. If nothing else, it will make people laugh; we don't want to hit our audience over the head with politics."

"This type of comedy is very delicate to stage, more so than a drama," says director Oliver. "A change in tone, a miss-step, a drop in rhythm and the jokes fall flat." During a run-through of the play a few days ago, the cast was already up to the fast rhythm of the very physical performance. The actors have worked separate 'fight-calls'

Reach the reporter at: sophie@lamorindaweekly.com

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