

The Two Dudes of Texas or The Bard in Hollywood

vtp dusts off Shakespeare to reveal hilarious comedy

I thank thee, the Bard would say to the Shakespeare project that took on the major task of rewriting one of his plays. Until now, his reputation as maybe the greatest writer in history was at stake every time someone read "Two Gentlemen of Verona". In its new version presented by the vienna theatre project (vtp) the play is now worthy of being part of the "First Folio".

With the help of his muse (Kathy Tanner), Shakespeare (Dave Moskin) is trying to write himself into heaven by fixing one of his earliest comedies. In the course, the gentlemen turn into "dudes", the gentlewomen into "chicks" and the plot is transferred to Texas and then the "All-Male School of Hair and Beauty" in England. The Bard takes the best lines from his original play mixes them with best-ofs from his other plays, Hollywood blockbusters, a touch of teenage comedy and lots of parody and fun.

The brilliant cast helps to turn Shakespeare's dullest comedy into one of the most hilarious plays to be staged in Vienna in recent years: Daniel Williams as unforgettable rapping, dancing and singing Proteus. Greg Nelsen excels as the lovesick macho Valentine. Lisa Gray's orgasmic speech on England is not to be missed and Barbara Jansenberger as Julia especially succeeds in bringing Shakespeare's own words to life again.

With the muse cross-dressing in true Shakespea- rean fashion and the Bard himself turning from mafia- Thurio into a small-time crimi- nal the play directed by Gregory Fuller is a must-see - not only for true Shakespeare lovers.

The play will be on from tomorrow until Nov 18, Mon to Sat 8 p.m. at the Ensembletheater Petersplatz 1, 1010 Vienna, tickets: 535 32 00 or 920 2583

<http://www.viennatheatreproject.at>