



Iron Age Theatre
info@ironagetheatre.org



Pimpified Shakespeare for the 21st Century

Iron Age Theatre blasts the stage with three one-act plays that retell Shakespeare through the lens of exploitation cinema.

Iron Age Theatre and the Centre Theater present the Philadelphia premiere of pimped-out, Shaolin, brain-eating Shakesploitation! Hamlet: Burning Fist of Denmark pits the Kung-Fu Dane against awesome Claudius; our dead lovers, Romeo and Juliet, become starcrossed zombies in Romeo and Juliet II: Apocalypse; and Othello, the moor, is putting the smackdown on crooked cops and pompous pimps in Grand Theft Othello: Venice City. The Bard is back with a vengeance!

Shakesploitation takes three classic Shakespeare plays, Othello, Romeo and Juliet and Hamlet and resets them into the cinematic worlds of 1970s exploitation films. Othello and his young sidekick Tre battle the man while Othello is distracted from his mission by his jealousy of Desdemona's infidelity. The crooked cop Iago brings the moor to his knees as the pimpish Cassio looks on.

Romeo and Juliet rise from the dead, the day after their suicide much to the joy and eventual dismay of their now peaceable families.

Hamlet must train in a new Kung Fu technique to defeat the awesome power of Claudius and avenge his father's murder in a slightly dubbed martial arts extravaganza. He is distracted by Ninja Rozencrantz and the blood thirsty and single minded Fortinbras. The play is riddled with stage combat and clever puns.

Shakesploitation, written by Andy Grigg, captures the conventions of both the cinema and Shakespeare while lampooning both genres. Iron Age will bring its signature intensity to the comedy pushing the limits of the script. The play is 75 minutes of non-stop laughter.

Director John Doyle stated, 'I cannot believe how lucky I am to get the opportunity to work on a script this funny. The play is over the top hilarious with a real foundation in the styles it mocks.'

Shakesploitation played to sold out houses at its premiere with New Millennium Theatre in Chicago. Critics raved and rated it "... highly recommended: High School English teachers take note: Given the Cotton Mather Administration running Washington and the spirit of Salem abroad in the land, taking your students to see this collection of three Shakespeare parodies might get you fired. The language is vulgar, the situations involve drugs, sex and martial arts- sort of like cable. But it may be worth the risk. No kid's going to come out of this hilarious show with anything less than a vastly enhanced appreciation for the Bard's badass potential. The masterpiece, though, is Grand Theft Othello, with the Moor channeling John Shaft circa 1971. The New Millennium cast is good with fits of stupendous," states the Reader of Chicago.



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Iron Age Theatre is one of the most critically acclaimed companies working in the Philadelphia area for more than 15 years. At last year's Fringe Festival the company presented two plays to sold out houses, "The Interrogation of Nathan Hale" and Howard Zinn's "Marx in Soho", which is now touring nationally. The company presented Amiri Baraka's incendiary play about race relations "Dutchman" at the African American Museum and the production was highlighted on the cover of Theatre Journal. The company is known for site-specific work taking plays into historic prisons, churches and other historic sites. The company was nominated for a Barrymore Award for Outstanding Ensemble for "Terra Nova," at the Centre Theater and recently produced Steinbeck's "Of Mice and Men," "The Elephant Man," and the O'Neill classic "Moon for the Misbegotten."

The cast includes Jered McLenigan who recently appeared as Sancho in "Man of LaMancha" and as Merrick in "The Elephant Man". Steve Hatzai is veteran director and actor both in Philadelphia and Allentown. Jerry Rudasill, who will play Othello, has worked with Waitstaff comedy troupe in Philadelphia. Krissy Johnson has just returned to Philadelphia from a long stay performing in New York. David Yashin was last seen at Rider University and in "City of Angels" at the Centre Theater.

The Philadelphia Live Arts Festival and Philly Fringe run from September 2-17, 2005. Ticket prices range from free to \$25, and can be purchased online beginning August 8 at www.livearts-fringe.org or after August 22 by calling 215.413.1318. Fringe guides which include dates, times, and venues for all performances for both festivals, will be available in the Philadelphia City Paper on August 25, 2005 and after this at all festival venues.

The Philadelphia Live Arts Festival and Philly Fringe were originally founded in 1997 as the Philadelphia Fringe Festival. Today, the Live Arts Festival serves as a series of selected cutting-edge, boundary-breaking performing arts events, created by some of the most renowned contemporary artists from our region and around the world. The Fringe serves as a collective home for artists bringing their work to audiences in every conceivable form - in traditional and untraditional venues, using new artistic forms and established ones, breaking rules or refining them.

Tickets for the production will cost \$15. Information about Shakesploitation, as well as a wealth of dramaturgical and study support can be found at the Iron Age Theatre website at www.ironagetheatre.org.