

Shakespeare gets sexy with "Fleetwood Macbeth"

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"Lady Macbeth" (Lisa Valenzuela) and "Macbeth" (Morgan Rusler) in Troubadour Theater Company's Fleetwood Macbeth playing at the Falcon Theatre. (Photo courtesy of Chelsea Sutton)

Those masters of murderous mirth who make up the Troubadour Theatre Company are back again at the Falcon Theatre in Burbank, this time with a rocking Shakespearean revival called "Fleetwood Macbeth."

The work, which premiered at the Falcon Theatre in January of 2004, is a wild-eyed rendition of one of Shakespeare's famous tragedies augmented by rock band Fleetwood Mac's memorable music catalogue.

Director Matt Walker has dusted off and refreshed the earlier adaptation, emphasizing the bard's renowned text by tightening the show's comic

smorgasbord.

Which is not to say that the proceedings don't run the gamut from giggles to groans, gasps to guffaws and, in a couple of truly outrageous moments, scream-out-loud laughter.

Witnessing the rehearsal process as this wacky group concocts such mayhem might be just as entertaining as the final outcome.

Following an amusing pre-show cavalcade introducing myriad characters, the production takes flight with the remarkably talented Morgan Rusler in the title role and Lisa Valenzuela as his homicide-inspiring spouse.

This, coupled with his heartfelt recitation of Macbeth's monologue lamenting his wife's death, demonstrates why Rusler is a standout amongst Southern California's acting community.

Valenzuela's impish grin and smoky vocal timbre make her song stylings the perfect match. Her duet version, with Rusler, of "Say You Love Me," as well as her solo rendition of "Dreams," is noteworthy.

Walker himself inhabits the role of Banquo who, following a toe-tapping performance of "Go Your Own Way" with Rusler, is dispatched to the afterlife, taking up residence as a recurring ghostly visage.

Award-winning comedienne Beth Kennedy plays Hecate, a goddess that leads her coven of scantily clad witches through many of the show's musical numbers.

Wearing costumer Sharon McGunigle's figure-flattering lingerie-like designs, it's easy to see why these nine witches are preferable to Shakespeare's traditional trio.