

Much Ado About Theatre Aurora's latest play: A review

By Scott Johnston

The themes of love and treachery involving those returning from war have no doubt played out countless times through the ages. Whether set in Sicily in the 1500s, or updated slightly to 1920s Canada, the stories work just as well.

That's what we see with Theatre Aurora's take on William Shakespeare's Much Ado About Nothing.

Although faithful to the story, characters and wording of the original play, director Shawn Rocheleau has given it few minor twists in both geography and costume to set the play in Aurora following World War 1.

The plot revolves around the interactions of some men recently returned from war and the family they are staying with temporarily. Young soldier Claudio and family daughter Hero quickly fall in love, but have a few obstacles to overcome.

Benedick and Beatrice are already in love, but don't realize it yet, as they are too busy verbally sparring with each other.

Throw in some other players with their own agendas, a bit of treachery and revenge, some mistaken identity, and despite these challenges, as with all good comedies, true love will win the day.

With 18 cast members, and a story with a few twists and turns spoken in Elizabethan dialogue it may sound like it's hard to follow, especially if one isn't familiar with the play. However, it's easy to keep up once things get going.

All of the performers do excellent jobs with their characters, and use their expressions, reactions and mannerisms to good effect to help supplement the more challenging dialog.

The set itself is simple and effective, and there is a wide variety of costume changes, which also helps establish the different scenes. It's been a while since Theatre Aurora has tackled Shakespeare, and the local setting is a nice twist on one of the world's best known comedies. It makes for an enjoyable night out.

Evening performances of ?Much Ado About Nothing? continue at Theatre Aurora, 150 Henderson Drive, January 19, 20, 21, 26, 27 and 28, with a matinee on January 22. Tickets are available through the box office at 905-727-3669.