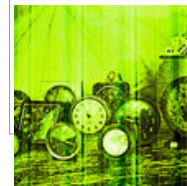
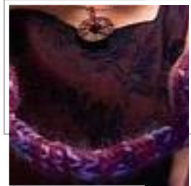


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Austinist Reviews: Wyrd Sisters



[This post comes from Anna Hanks, who'll soon be joining the Austinist staff!]

We admit that when it comes to being entertained, we have the attention span of a kitten. We're happily distracted by bright shiny costumes, jingly bells, and the occasional gilded, squeaky rubber chicken, especially when said chicken is employed to excellent comedic effect. Put a capable, young, red-headed actress charmed with crazy comedic timing into a twinkly, jingly costume, and we're smitten. **Angela Loftus**, 14, ably plays such a fetching Fool -- decked out in a harlequin-diamond outfit -- in the Vortex Repertory Company and Summer Youth Theatre's version of **Terry Pratchett's** *Wyrd Sisters*. The show was adapted for the stage by **Stephen Briggs** and is directed by **Mick D'arcy**.

Based on Pratchett's original novel of the same name, *Wyrd Sisters* is part of the novelist's enormously popular multi-volume Discworld series. Pratchett's Discworld has parallels to both the magical world of Harry Potter and Douglas Adams' fantastical *Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*. "Terry Pratchett is a great novelist," Vortex's Producing Artistic Director **Bonnie Cullum** told the audience in her opening night introduction.

The postmodern *Wyrd Sisters* juxtaposes high-art Shakespearean references against a fairy tale of a long-lost prince in a near-textbook example of the

clever recombination of cultural objects that defines postmodernism. Luckily, you don't need a graduate degree to appreciate it. If you're coming to *Wyrd Sisters* without a primer in Pratchett, you may see this production as almost a traditional fairy tale. Maybe even a story with shades of Shrek's fractured-fairy-tale world, or the numerous enchantments of the musical *Into the Woods*.

Yet *Wyrd Sisters'* fantasy front is wrapped around a *Macbeth* 'n' *Hamlet* back-story. Set in the Discworld kingdom of Lancre, the plot revolves around the death -- though not departure -- of the late King Verence (**Sebastian Garcia**), and the somewhat bumbling, murderous and regret-filled Leonal Felmet, Duke of Lancre (**Steven Fay***) and his fiercely ambitious wife (**Stephanie Lumpkin**). The show's charms also included the imposing and slightly smarmy witch, Granny Weatherwax (**Traci Koesis***), who kept the action moving forward with her crone-ish pronouncements. Other storybook characters include a spirited-away heir, three-powerful witches and even the taxman.

While this was a solid youth show, it was not without flaws. Though the scene design (**Ann Marie Gordon**)/costumes (**Talena Martinez**)/lighting (**Daniel Garrison**) surrounding the brief segments with Death and the Demon were pretty darn spectacular, we were completely unable to understand anything those characters said due to the use of voice-distortion devices. We could understand everyone else in the cast, even from the back row -- that's an achievement in a tuition-free program for teen actors.

Then again, SYT is in its 16th year, so this isn't exactly their first lap around the limelight. That makes the program older than most of the 11 teen participants, whom Cullum said were mostly in the 14-15 age range. "Under driving

age," Cullum clarified. Talking to Cullum, we were surprised to hear how young the participants were. "They carry themselves well," Cullum said. We totally agree.

Our harshest complaint: Friday's opening night dragged a touch, especially the first act. Some scenes lacked the oodles of energy and drive we wanted from a youth production. Yet, to be fair, we might've thought things were dragging because we were impatient to pick up our brand-new Harry Potter at midnight.

Catch the show if you're a fan of Pratchett's Discworld. Or if you find a gilded rubber squeaky chicken highly amusing.

**Adult Guest Artist*

Photo of Natalie C. Houchins, Anissa Lashai McVea, and Traci Koesis by Drew Smith, courtesy of The Vortex.

Wyrđ Sisters

The Vortex

Through tomorrow, July 28 at 8pm

Contact the author of this article or email tips@austinist.com with further questions, comments or tips.

By Jooley Ann in [Arts and Entertainment](#) on July 27, 2007 8:39 PM

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guest 3 years ago

by golly. what is up with that girl's nose? it somehow makes me angry.

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guest 3 years ago

She's supposed to be a witch? The wrinkles on her forehead are terrible. It's like her hair was too heavy for her head or something.

Maybe it's just the dinosaur egg about to hatch from her frontal lobe that's making all those weird lines.

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mdahmus 3 years ago

Don't know if those are supposed to be all 3 of Pratchett's witches, but 2 of them aren't supposed to be old. His are more like the Fates - virgin, mother, spinster.

Like

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Real-time updating is **enabled**. ([Pause](#))

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