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Hedwig and the Angry Inch has been extended at ACE Annex.

Quest for Love

ACE Annex offers fabulous Hedwig.

Similar in genus to *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*, *Hedwig and The Angry Inch* is quickly evolving into something of a cult classic, drawing “Hedheads” to late-night venues, and even spawning a Hedwig convention. The Actor’s Cabaret Annex production of John Cameron Mitchell’s Obie-winning, gender-bending musical rock and roll extravaganza continues to draw appreciative crowds.

On a set filled with attention-grabbing artwork, a collage of twisted torsos, and a screen used as a backdrop for added imagery and audience sing-alongs, the musical opens on Hedwig’s national tour of the Bilgewater’s

she meets young Tommy, an aspiring musician, whom Hedwig takes under her wing.

Transforming him into rock star Tommy Gnosis, her ungrateful protégé makes it big by stealing Hedwig’s songs. Complicating matters further is Hedwig’s current relationship with husband and band mate, Yitzhak, who dresses like a man, is played by a woman, and who likes to gussy up in Hedwig’s wigs and outfits.

Enough cannot be said about Adam Goldthwaite’s commanding and mesmerizing performance as the irrepressible and oft-conflicted Hedwig. From in-your-face songs such as “Angry Inch” to moving ballads like “The Origin of Love,” Goldthwaite’s strong vocals

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chain of “family seafood restaurants” (similar to Sizzler, but not quite as prestigious). And through a medley of hard-rocking anthems and soulful ballads, Hedwig chronicles her tragically twisted story.

Raised behind the Iron Curtain in East Berlin, Hansel longs to find freedom on the other side of the wall. When an American GI sugar daddy comes along offering gummy bears and matrimony as a way out, Hansel is ecstatic. However, there is a catch — to obtain a license, he must first “leave a little something behind.”

The result is a botched sex change operation that renders him essentially genderless. When his GI dumps him, leaving him alone in a trailer park in Kansas, Hansel puts on some makeup, dons a blond wig, and reinvents herself as wannabe rock star Hedwig. To help support her dubious singing career, Hedwig takes on a variety of odd jobs, including babysitting, where

resonate with indignant anger and heartfelt emotion, and his outfits are très stunning. Dori Prange is fabulous as Yitzhak. Although she doesn’t have any speaking parts, through her dazzling vocals and bass guitar accompaniment, Prange is a persuasive presence on stage. Similarly, Connor Dudley lends his fine voice and musical skills on acoustic guitar to his role as Tommy Gnosis. Rounding out the cast is Patricia Morse as Hedwig’s mother, and backing up Hedwig as The Angry Inch is the awesome local glam/rock girl band The Ovulators.

While *Hedwig* may not be suitable for everyone (under 18 must be accompanied by an adult), its deeper message goes beyond mere gender confusion to explore other important issues such as identity, freedom, and the human desire to love and be loved. *Hedwig* continues July 2, 3, 16, 17, 24 and 25 (no performances July 9 and 10). **EW**



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