

TONY RUST (IN BOAT) AND MARK ALLEN
IN COTTAGE THEATRE'S *SCAPINO!*



LA DOLCE VITA

Cottage Theatre offers a dose of escapist fun with Scapino!

Bravo, *Scapino!* Based on Molière's 1671 comedy *Les Fourberies de Scapin*, Cottage Theatre's presentation of *Scapino!* — directed by George Comstock — is a quirky tale of love and mischief. The play is set in Naples, and the frantic plot is fairly easy to follow, assuming you've had enough coffee that day.

A servant by the name of Scapino (Tony Rust) plays devil's advocate for a pair of love-struck sons as they try to dupe their wealthy fathers out of their money. It's difficult to tell if Scapino has a god complex or is just a drunkard; either way, he's one sly scamp and knows how to trick anyone into anything.

The sons, Ottavio and Leandro (Jon Deline and Randall Brous), have their hearts set on two young women, Giacinta (Amber Brower) and Zerbinetta (Tracy Nygard). The romantic intrigues unravel quickly and reveal obstacles (with a bit of whiplash) put in their way by Leandro's father, Geronte (Mark Allen), and Argante (Dale Flynn), Ottavio's papa. Both men are greedy, traditional and incredibly rich, but are easily fooled by Scapino and his partner in crime, Sylvestro (Kyle Carrillo-Enders).

The highlights of the play aren't necessarily found in the plot. We've all heard it before — love is messy and having daddy issues is nothing new. The delivery of the play, however, is downright hilarious. Cast members run through the audience, often breaking the fourth wall and speaking to unsuspecting bystanders. There are a few fumbles and mishaps throughout the performance, but it's hard to tell what's scripted and what's clumsiness due to the overall quirkiness of the show.

Some of the best parts of *Scapino!* aren't front-and-center but, rather, take place in the background. Carlo (Earl Ruttencutter) is a lovable man who steals bites of spaghetti from businessmen, popping in and out of scenes with a new scheme for making a few bucks. And keep your eyes on the waiters and waitresses, who at times deliver doses of humor that outdo the leads.

Scapino! is a perfect play for anyone looking to unwind, get a few laughs and maybe even score some (spoiler alert) free candy. This is definitely a family-friendly show and has enough interaction with the audience to keep the kids engaged and giggly.

Scapino! runs now through June 26 at the Cottage Theatre; \$15-\$20, tickets and info at cottage theatre.org or 541-942-8001.



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