

Sherlockian Theatrical Society

A non-Judgmental Play Appreciation Society

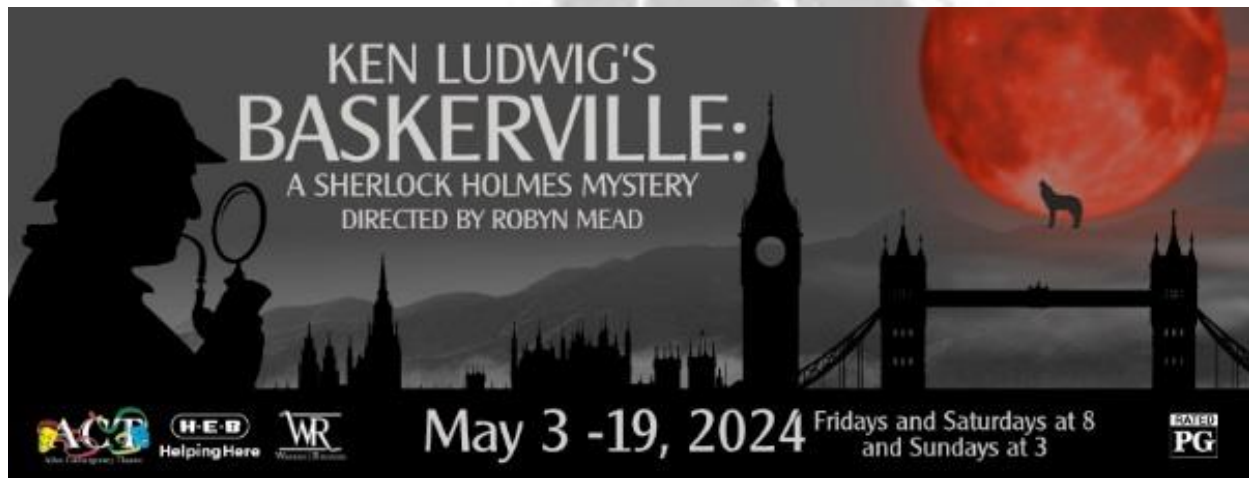
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"Baskerville: A Sherlock Holmes Mystery"

By Ken Ludwig

Allen, TX



I hope this review does not sound like a broken record...record...record. If something is good, keep going back to the well. This is exactly what Uncritics #001, 004 and #011 did over the weekend. As we descended on the Allen Contemporary Theatre, it was the 9th time to see this play (Newsletters 6, 10, 11, 13, 14, 19, 21, and 29). Just like the previous 8 times, it was thoroughly enjoyable. Imagine, if you can (in Rod Serling voice), where time and space converge. Where everything is changed but remains the same. You have just walked into the Baskerville: The Twilight Zone.

Director and Set Designer, Robyn Mead (not the one from CNN) leads the audience into a brilliant interpretation of Ken Ludwig's hilarious play. Sherlock Holmes (Eric Levy) and Dr. Watson (Beau Dameron) are the stoic anchors for the play's 30 different scenes. Surrounded by 3 ½ (Explained later) actors, they try to keep their faces straight and even succeed some of the time. Actors I, II and Actress I (Brian Hokanson, Jeff York, and Laura Jennings, respectively) are nearly flawless in their quick changes. I say nearly due to the fact that there are a few designed wardrobe malfunctions. Each one was a delight to watch and listen

to but Ms. Jennings stole the show. The half "actor" mentioned above was Inspector Lestrade. He was a handpuppet whose head, adorned with a Bobby Helmet, was the same size as the other whole actors. Manipulated by Mr. York, they held conversations with one another.

There is a scene inside the Northumberland Hotel that features a wailing infant. In the other productions, this baby is heard but not seen. The time, the audience sees a pram with a baby doll's body and the head of Ms. Jennings being pushed across the stage. The pram is draped to the floor so the visual effect nearly brought the house down. It was very clever, indeed. Another gag was when Holmes and Watson were interview Laura Lyons. She begins speaking in a strong southern drawl only to be reminded that it was the wrong continent, where she scowls at Holmes and restates her lines in a proper British accent. The adage 'The Show Must Go On' was on full display on this evening's performance when several minor mishaps occur but they just ab-libbed and kept right on going. The full house of 120 seats thoroughly enjoyed the night.

The changing background scenes were on a large video screen at the back of the stage and done perfectly. There were seamless changes from Grimpen (OHHHH) Mire to Baskerville Hall to the sitting rooms at 221B Baker Street. At Baskerville Hall's portrait gallery, where Sir Hugo's picture hung, there was a magical transformation from the projected video image to the real live person inside the picture frame. I won't spoil the brilliant pun used in that scene, just know it was as funny as the rest of the play.

As a reminder, The Sherlockian Theatrical Society is a non-judgmental society. It is our belief that any play about Sherlock Holmes is worth attending. We love Sherlock Holmes and we love live theater, so nothing will deter us off of our chosen path.

Break a leg!!!

Flower Mound, TX
May 11, 2024



L to R Inspector Lestrade, Brian Hokanson, Jeff York, Beau Dameron, Laura Jennings, Eric Levy

