

# The Life and Times of Rikki Lee Travolta

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RIKKILEETRAVOLTA

## Metropolis Forum is Pure Musical Comedy Brilliance

Featuring music and lyrics by Stephen Sondheim and a book by Burt Shevelove and Larry Gelbart, *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum* now playing at Metropolis Performing Arts Centre through June 29, is a hilarious musical comedy romp sure to delight audiences.

The story combines the work of Roman playwright Plautus with catchy, toe tapping songs and the spirit of vaudeville.

Set in ancient Rome, *Forum* tells the story of an awkward young man by the name of Hero and his infatuation with the beautiful maiden Philia. One small problem, Philia is a courtesan from the house of Marcus Lycus – a man who deals in the sale of beautiful women. In fact, Hero's love Philia has been sold to military hero Miles Gloriosus.

Enter Hero's slave Pseudolus – a crafty gent who longs for his freedom. Pseudolus, played brilliantly by Tommy Bullington, strikes a deal that if he can somehow turn the tables to allow Hero and Philia to marry, he will be set free. The comedy builds to a fervor as Pseudolus's plot of deceit encounters every headache imaginable...mostly at the expense of Hysterium, head slave of Hero's family.

William Marquez is a comedic delight in the role of Hysterium. His comic timing is impeccable. As young lover Hero, Adam Ross Brody displays a fine voice and stellar acting wrapped up in an appropriately gangly and awkward package. His virgin love interest Philia is well played by Maddy Kelly, who aptly captures the deer in the headlights innocence of the proverbial dimwitted blond.

Erik Dohner provides an imposing characterization of braggart warrior Miles Gloriosus. His deep bass voice and larger-than-life approach to the physicality of the role are impressive. As sniveling skin salesman Marcus Lycus, Teddy Gales holds his own in the well balanced cast.

As Hero's parents Senex and Domina, Austin Nelson Jr. and Melissa Crabtree are well matched. Nelson Jr. is the spineless husband longing for some extramarital attention while Crabtree is the frightening bride who runs the household. Bob Sanders inspires many belly laughs as their elderly neighbor Erronius.

A Greek chorus of Nick Arceo, Renee Savoy, and Eric Deutz entertain in multiple roles. Marcus Lycus' other courtesans are all beautiful, alluring, and talented in their own ways. They include Madelyne Forrester, Parker Guidry, Joe Farrell, Alaina Wis, Sophie Vitello, and Sarah Beth Lipsman.

Direction by Lauren Rawitz, music direction by Kailey Rockwell, and choreography by Bryan J. Wlas are all excellent. The audience was in stitches throughout opening night.

For a delightful evening of sidesplitting laughter and great entertainment, look no further than *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum* at Metropolis Performing Arts Centre. Executive Artistic Director Joe Keefe and his staff have quietly built Metropolis into a true theatrical destination to rival any theatre in Chicago.

*A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum* plays Thursdays, Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays in downtown Arlington Heights (111 West Campbell Street). Street parking is available. Free parking is available in the public garage behind the theatre. For a complete performance schedule visit [www.MetropolisArts.com](http://www.MetropolisArts.com) (<http://www.MetropolisArts.com>) or contact the box office at (847) 577-2121.

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