

The Book of Adam

Autobiography of the First Human Clone



A Novel by Robert M. Hopper

Review

Much Ado About Nothing

by The Old Globe

Usually it's the shows at the nearby Starlight Bowl that get buzzed by airplanes. Now the buzzing has spread to The Old Globe's outdoor Festival Theatre. Set in the early 1920s, it is a miniature World War I fighter plane that buzzes above the audience as it flies toward the stage and beyond in a tribute to lead actor Billy Campbell, best known as the stunt pilot in Disney's popular movie *The Rocketeer*. After his plane disappears backstage, Billy makes his memorable entrance by tumbling down the stairs of one of the theatre aisles while entwined in his parachute.

Thus begins this hilarious and imaginative retelling of Shakespeare's *Much Ado About Nothing* directed by **Brendon Fox** and starring a magnificent cast from top to bottom, led by headliners **Dana Delany** (*China Beach, Tombstone, Housesitter*) and **Billy Campbell** (*The Rocketeer*). And both of the big stars truly sparkle in this – one of Shakespeare's richest comedies containing a couple of his best characters in Benedick (Billy Campbell) and Beatrice (Dana Delany) whose smart and witty verbal sparring make for a classic battle of the sexes. In addition, the script builds in one of the more intense dramatic moments in Shakespearean comedy when Beatrice's sweet and innocent cousin Hero (**Erica N. Tazel**) is wrongly and publicly accused of infidelity at her wedding by her groom Claudio (**Adam Ludwig**) – an accusation engineered by the loathsome Don John (**Al Espinosa**).



Billy Campbell has an innate sense of comedic timing and body language, setting the tone with his big entrance and never letting go. His biggest show-stealing scene is when he overhears his friends remarking about how much Beatrice, who supposedly hates him, actually loves him. Unbeknownst to him, his friends *want* to be overheard as

part of their good-intentioned plot to get the two sworn enemies together. Billy's uproarious attempts to listen in without being seen make use of virtually every inch of the set's beautiful courtyard (designed by **Anna Louizos**) including the walls, the vegetation, and a well-positioned water fountain.

Dana Delany seems to be a natural for the saucy Beatrice, filling the role with remarkable personality and charm. Dana's bewitching eyes and smile, along with her droll delivery, helps her to match her sworn archenemy at every step as she playfully knocks the initially egotistical Benedick down to size. She also delivers the single best line of the play following the disastrous wedding where Claudio had rejected her cousin at the altar. When Benedick, by now hopelessly in love with Beatrice, tries to ease her sorrow by asking if there is anything he could do to help, she abruptly stops her crying to give a brutally and hysterically succinct solution that Benedick is quite unprepared for, but one that I can't give away here. You'll just have to see the show and hear it for yourself. You'll be glad you did!

Performances through October 12, 2003.

P.S. Try to sit in the center or the left side of the amphitheatre or your view of the balcony scenes will be at a bad angle.

[Rob Hopper](#)

San Diego Playbill

~ Cast ~

Margaret: Ryan Michelle Bathe

Watch, Servant: Rod Brogan

Benedick: Billy Campbell

Watch, Servant: David Raphael D'Agostini

Beatrice: [Dana Delany](#)

Balthasar: Michael Doyle

Don John: Al Espinosa

Dogberry: Tommy A. Gomez

Priest, Servant: Christopher Gottschalk

Antonio: Antonio "T.J." Johnson

Sexton, Servant: Antonie Knoppers

Claudio: Adam Ludwig

Borachio: Andrew McGinn

Servant: Jennifer Lynn McMillin

Verges: Michael Newman

Leonato: Richard Poe

Conrade: Neil Shah

Servant: Jennifer Stewart

Ursula: Nisi Sturgis

Hero: Erica N. Tazel

Don Pedro: Jeff Woodman

Watch, Servant: Karen Zippler

Director: Brendon Fox

Scenic Design: Anna Louizos

Costume Design: Linda Cho

Lighting Design: Peter Maradudin

Original Music & Sound Design: Lindsay Jones

Dramaturg: Dakin Matthews

Stage Manager: Leila Knox

