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## Rosie DeLeon is Feste in Lab Theater's production of Shakespeare's 'Twelfth Night'

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*Twelfth Night* resumes tonight at Lab Theater in downtown Fort Myers. One of the stand-outs in a very young and talented cast is Rosie DeLeon. She plays the jester or fool named Feste.

Feste is traditionally cast as a man. But with blond tresses flying and dressed in dominatrix black, DeLeon embodies the spirit of this gender-blurred production of *Twelfth Night*. For it is Feste's role to act as both intermediary and incendiary. Although she's in the employ of Olivia, she spends time entertaining the courtesans at Orsino's palace. Although her loyalties should be first and foremost to her mistress, she spends copious amounts of time interrupting her mourning by participating in the outrageous drunken antics of Olivia's



uncle, Sir Toby, and his gullible partner in crime, Sir Andrew Aguecheek. More, Feste steps outside of the structure of the play, commenting to the audience by way of asides and soliloquys on the characters with whom she interacts and the idyllic world of Illyria which they populate.

Feste, it is true, is a Dionysian character. She lives to have fun and entertain. She sings. She dances.



She cracks jokes and takes swipes at everyone around her. But she also possesses a cruel streak, which the audience sees first when she helps Sir Toby foment a duel between Andrew, who desires a marriage with Toby's niece, Olivia, and a young boy by the name of Cesario, who Olivia clearly prefers. Although this production of Twelfth Night sadly does not include an y swords play, the effeminate Cesario is clearly no match for the knighted Andrew, and Feste takes great pleasure



scaring Cesario and making sure that he fights the bigger, older man.

But Feste's shenanigans at Cesario's expense pale in comparison to the sadistic pleasure she takes at tormenting Olivia's pompous steward, Malvolio, who is thrown into a madhouse in chains and a blindfold after he nearly sexually assaults Olivia after receiving a text in which his mistress ostensibly tells him she loves and wants him and instructs him to come to her in her courtyard wearing nothing more than yellow pants, white



cuffs and a black bowtie.

It's a terrific part and one which allows DeLeon to showcase her formidable and emerging skills as both a comedic and dramatic actress. Her performance in *Twelfth Night* caps off a 2015-2016 season that saw her appear in the relatively minor part of Elaine in *Calendar Girls* and then assume a greater role in *The Rauschenberg Project Play*. Rosie has also been running tech for Laboratory Theater in previous productions. Just 21 years old, the future looks bright for this talented young actress. But for now, make plans to see her in



*Twelfth Night*,

which is only on stage now through May 7.

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## About the Author



Tom Hall is both an amateur artist and aspiring novelist who writes art quest thrillers. He is in the final stages of completing his debut novel titled "Art Detective," a story that fictionalizes the discovery of the fabled billion-dollar Impressionist collection of Parisian art dealer Josse Bernheim-Jeune, thought by many to have perished during World War II when the collection's hiding place, Castle de Rastignac in southern France, was destroyed by the Wehrmacht in reprisal for attacks made by members of the Resistance operating in the area. A former tax attorney, Tom holds a bachelor's degree as well as both a juris doctorate and masters of laws in taxation from the University of Florida. Tom lives in Estero, Florida with his fiancée, Connie, and their four cats.

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