

Celebrate a Queer Irish Musical at the Hollywood Fringe: A Man of No Importance

« Previous / Next »

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A Man of No Importance was the [Good People Theater Company](#)'s opening show. Offered to Los Angeles audiences for the first time at the Hollywood Fringe Festival, this chamber musical pays homage to Oscar Wilde and Wildean codification of gay people. Alfie Byrne (Dominic McChesney) is a bus conductor in 1964 Dublin, but a poet and community theater director at heart. He passes out bus tickets while reading Oscar Wilde's poetry to his passengers. After work, he puts on plays at St. Imelda's and, most privately, he holds a secret in his heart that causes him to feel shame and self-loathing. In the end, he sings, "you just have to love who you love."

The momentum in this production took a song and a half to find its legs, but once it did it transports the audience to a different era in the LGBT movement. In that period, you signal to your potential partners by reading a certain book in public or asking for a cigarette you do not intend to smoke. The shame and bullying displayed in this play is still very much a reality in some places.

Shirley Anne Hatton plays Alfie's sister, Lily Byrne, with many deeply felt layers. At first you might think she's ready to shame her brother for the way he is, but she has to come to terms with his sexuality just as Alfie has. The rest of the cast played a slate filled with vibrant, quirky and lovable characters in this Dublin community dedicated to their community theater.

