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## The Toxic Avenger Musical

THE TOXIC AVENGER MUSICAL is so Hysterical and Politically Incorrect, Ya Gotta Love It! Reviewed by Shari Barrett on 6-6-16.

Based on Lloyd Kaufman's cult film and winner of the Outer Critics Circle Award for Best Off-Broadway Musical, THE TOXIC AVENGER MUSICAL is a charming love story of an unlikely hero, his beautiful blind girlfriend, a corrupt New Jersey mayor and two guys who play every other resident in the town, everyone from bullies, mobsters, old ladies, to stiletto-wearing back-up singers.

The show is a Fringe first for this Off-Broadway hit, presented by Good People Theater Company for a total for 11 performances from June 6–26 at Sacred Fools Lillian Theater. It's difficult to believe how such a fantastic show could possibly be put together in such a short time, especially given the skill of the 5 actors who portray so many roles to comic perfection, accompanied by five musicians led by musical director Corey Hirsch who totally rock the house during every number. Kudos to producer/director/choreographer Janet Miller for her on-going dedication to presenting high quality entertainment that is both enjoyable and thought-provoking.

The action takes place in what could be considered the cesspool known as the garden state of New Jersey. Nerdy Melvin Ferd the Third (Jared Reed) wants to clean up Tromaville, the most polluted town in the foul-smelling state (just off Exit 13B on the Turnpike) and in the process win the heart of the lovely town librarian Sarah (Kim Dalton) who just happens to be blind. She certainly epitomizes the phrase "love is blind" especially in her carefully planned movements that always remind us of her "marketable handicap." She had the audience in stitches when she moved stage right and filed books on a shelf that did not exist, causing the books to just fall to the floor. Her show-stopping song "My Big French Boyfriend" accompanied by Shinequa (Danny Fetter) and Diane (Wesley Tunison) is so cleverly presented I could not stop laughing at the ridiculousness of it all.

Foiled by the mayor's bullies Sluggo and Bozo, (Danny Fetter and Wesley Tunison, each of whom play at least half a dozen characters who make you wonder how so many quirky people could possible live in one town), Melvin is dumped into a vat of radioactive toxic waste, only to reemerge as The Toxic Avenger, New Jersey's first superhero. Affectionately known as Toxie, our new hero is a seven-foot mutant freak with superhuman strength and a heart as big as Newark. He's out to save New Jersey, end global warming, and win the girl.

Also playing many roles is the talented singer/comedienne Shirley Anne Hatton who shines as Tromaville's out-of-her-mind Mayor Babs Beigood dressed in a business suit and Ma Fred in her housedress, especially when they wind up cursing each other during the big Act I finale "Bitch/Slut/Liar/Whore" during which Hatton runs off stage to switch between characters. That is until her last entrance when she appears as both women at the same time, a moment that will have you rolling on the floor in laughter.

And watch for the hard-working stage crew who assists in the many scene changes and always let you know exactly where you are, often by popping out with signs in the most unexpected of ways.

Technical credits are just as great with dozens of colorful off-best costumes designed by Mary Reilly (especially the incredible quick costume change that transforms Jared Reed into the green Toxie in a matter of minutes). sound effects designed by Robert Schroeder and make-up design and Laugh-In inspired scenic art by Zorro J. Susel which sets the perfect mood for all the outrageousness of the show!

Be sure to book your seats early as THE TOXIC AVENGER MUSICAL is bound to be a Fringe favorite and performances will sell out. Tickets are \$20 and can be purchased at <http://www.hollywoodfringe.org/projects/3539>. Learn More at [www.goodpeopletheaterco.org](http://www.goodpeopletheaterco.org)

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