

An Absolute Turkey of a time

 By Eugene Yiga 15 Mar 2013

Georges Feydeau wrote more than 60 plays in his lifetime and is recognised as the forerunner of absurdist theatre and the father of French farce. One of his works is *An Absolute Turkey* (*Le Dindon* in French), a timeless comedy that is being reimagined more than 100 years after it first appeared.



This is the part where I usually start talking about the plot. Not today. There are more than a dozen characters, most of whom are having (or want to have) affairs with one or more of the others. My friend and I spent part of the interval trying to recap the dangerous liaisons to figure out what would happen next. Then we gave up, partly because it was too complicated - I could barely remember the names - but also because we didn't want to spoil the fun.

Basically, *An Absolute Turkey* is about the battle between primal lust and rational love. It's about people behaving in ways that seem hypocritical on the surface but somehow make sense to them. And it's a farce so it's sometimes quite slapstick and quite loud. But what a wild ride if you're up for embracing how silly it is!

A psychedelic 1960s vibe



Director Christopher Weare's interpretation gives the play a psychedelic 1960s vibe, with dialogue catalysed and punctuated by guitar riffs from artists like The Rolling Stones, The Beatles, and Queen. (Occasionally racy background projections, which include some by artist [Alan Aldridge](#), echo back to Feydeau's [Belle Époque](#).)

The set is quite bare but comes alive thanks to three talented [foley](#) artists. They're so inconspicuous that it took me a while to realise they were opening and closing real doors to coincide perfectly with the characters doing the same to imaginary ones. They were so on point that they even improvised quickly when a certain prop went astray.

Speaking of improvisation, credit must go to the cast, whose ability to think on their feet was remarkable. Even when one of the performers slipped, fell, and had to be carried off quietly, nobody stopped. Instead,

everything kept moving along with relentlessly slick comic timing right to the end. I guess the phrase "all's well that ends well" should apply to life off the stage too.

An Absolute Turkey is at Cape Town's [Theatre on the Bay](#) until 23 March. Tickets are available from [Computicket](#).

ABOUT EUGENE YIGA

Eugene graduated from the University of Cape Town with distinctions in financial accounting and classical piano. He then spent over two-and-half years working in branding and communications at two of South Africa's top market research companies. Eugene also spent over three-and-a-half years at an eLearning start-up, all while building his business as an award-winning writer. Visit www.eugeneyiga.com, follow [@eugeneyiga](#) on Twitter, or email hello@eugeneyiga.com to say, um, hello. View my profile and articles...

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