

Art Shulman's *THE YENTAS WEAR RED HATS*, a comedy about yentas who shift from playing team basketball to form a "girls club", and the men that intertwine, performs at North Hollywood's Secret Rose Theatre.

Tess (Ellen Bienenfeld) and Craig (Art Shulman) have been a couple for some eight weeks. They are of a "seasoned" variety, meaning they are far from being young but remain young at heart. Craig is known in the local circles to coach a ladies basketball team consisting of woman beyond their midpoint in their lives.

The team itself called the "Yentas" also consists of Anne (Anita Borcia), Becky (Nancy Kramer), Mary Margaret (Sue Molenda), Janice (Carol Anne Seflinger) and Trudi (Suzan Solomon). When their season of playing basketball has concluded, they decide to form a Red Hats club. The purpose of this group is to get together and to have fun. They even sport a uniform consisting of purple dresses and red hats of various sizes and styles.

Craig feels he's being pushed aside from these ladies, but a rival of sorts appear, Jake (J. Kent Inasy) who seems to be wooing Tess. It's a clash of a gathering of ladies, as well as if Craig will ask Tess to marry him, although there is some motion that's stopping Tess to accept. Could it be nerves, another man, or something else?

This comedy written by local writer Art Shulman is a charming look of how those of a select demographic (aged 50+), can shake off any stigma of being up in years to enjoy life, even if that enjoyment has its little issues. The cast of ladies that appear in this play hold a delightful personality that is far from a "little old lady" stereotype that's been around for quite some time. Much of the action takes place in Craig's living room, and there is a lot of dialogue to go through. It's far from being talky, yet what's spoken moves the storyline along.

Kaz Matamura directs this program that is charming, lighthearted, and is sweet within its own method.

A special note goes to Liz Nankin for her costuming of the yentas as they become their red hat group, donning purple outfits and red hats that are eccentric, but are not overly wild.

For those not in the know, a "yenta" is a Yiddish word to describe a woman who is usually of the Jewish persuasion who is a gossip, busybody, or someone who meddles into a situation that they shouldn't become involved in. (The term is not to be confused with describing a matchmaker, although there is a relationship subplot connected to this story!)

Whatever the case and whatever the label, it's a very pleasant play that proves that getting up in years is another asset to keep rather than a curse to dread. And these yentas will back up that fact, red hats and all!

*THE YENTAS WEAR RED HATS*, performs at the Secret Rose Theatre, 11246 Magnolia Blvd, (one and a half blocks west of Lankershim) North Hollywood, until December 18th. Show times are Friday and Saturday nights at 8:00 PM, and Sunday afternoons at 2:00 PM. For more information or for reservations, call (818) 285-8699, or via online at <http://www.TheYentasWearRedHats.com>

- Rich Borowy, Accessibly Live