

# The Yentas Wear Red Hats

Written by [Radomir Vojtech Luza](http://RadomirVojtechLuza.NoHoArtsDistrict.com), NoHoArtsDistrict.com

The Yentas, a team in the Women Over 60 Basketball League, decide to form a Red Hats chapter



Written by **Art Shulman**

**The Yentas Wear Red Hats @ Secret Rose Theatre**

If you are interested in a play about discord on a women's basketball team, make a beaten path to Art Shulman's "[The Yentas Wear Red Hats](#)" playing at Secret Rose Theatre in the North Hollywood Arts District through December 18th.

This is the story of the Yentas, a team in the Women over 60 Basketball League, who not only decide to form a Red Hats chapter but find underlying schisms, differences of opinion and personality clashes among teammates that threaten to tear the team apart.

The notion of up to eight seniors on stage at any given time is an original, novel and witty approach to writing a play.

Shulman, who also acts in the production, once more finds a path to his truth which in turn becomes our truth.

The energy, wisdom and depth these over 60 women demonstrate throughout begs the question: Why are there not more plays featuring older women?

Shulman's language is funny, but also realistic and gripping.

**It leaves us, the audience, more entertained, inspired and enlightened than before we entered the building.**

This is a playwright who has listened to senior citizens and bleeds their very heart and soul on the stage on Magnolia Boulevard in North Hollywood.

A writer who is not afraid of asking why especially older female actresses are shut out of most local productions, and proceeds to give them an outlet for their talents, should not only be praised but produced more often.

The prolific playwright's ("Doubting Thomas," "The Rabbi & The Shiksa," "Sex Is Good For You!" "Old Broads Can't Dunk," "Not One More Foot of Land," etc.) words seem to sound the call to end discord, disturbance and mediocrity not only in the 60 and over crowd but throughout this society and civilization at a time when our world can use it the most.

The direction by Kaz Matamura is, especially in the Act Two on the Opening Night this critic saw the play, taut, exuberant and electric.

Matamura allows the actors to be themselves within the framework of the play in a positive, energetic and capable manner.

**This is a director with a future and a chance to helm bigger and more intricate theatre.**

As is, the co-founder of Secret Rose Theatre and founder of the non-profit Fire Rose Productions exhibits a talent and proclivity for comedy that should not go overlooked and could serve her well in the future.

Matamura assembles a gifted cast well-versed in Shulman's comedic brilliance.

Stand-outs include:

J. Kent Inasy (Jake) hits a home run here with a sensitive, naturalistic and down-to-earth portrayal of the rabbi that will hopefully urge the American Academy of Dramatic Arts graduate to move to the boards from his "usual" position designing the light scheme.

Suzan Solomon (Trudi) just about runs away with the play. Her vivacious, radiant and convincing turn proves that the Off-Broadway veteran has much more of her talent left to share with theatre audiences. The longtime singer-actress of such hit films as "Saturday Night Fever" just about takes over Act One and lets her stage presence and boundless energy guide her throughout.

But it is Carol Anne Seflinger (Janice) who steals the show. In a performance at once vulnerable yet powerful, the veteran stage actress displays a rock hard confidence and sugar-coated sex appeal which turn Act Two, especially, into a romp for her considerable charm and sense of humor.

Having acted professionally since the age of four-and-a-half, the longtime performer (over 70 films and plays) exhibits intelligence, stage awareness and instinct that help her give a commanding characterization.

**Seflinger's nature and personality are such that she can portray women half her age.**

This critic hopes to see her on the stages of North Hollywood and Los Angeles again soon.

Furthering the message of the play are Inasy's innovative lighting design, Steve Shaw's sound design, Elizabeth Nankin's costume design and Chris Winfield's set design.

"The Yentas Wear Red Hats" succeeds because of its over 60 core group of actors, not despite them.

The comedy makes us, the audience, laugh and think at the same time.

It is a timely and often lighthearted look at sport, sincerity and friendship.

The play, which also underscores much larger universal themes such as love, adultery, romance and everyday existence and suffering in today's contemporary world, never forgets that its main duties are to entertain, make people laugh and draw them away from the pain inherent in living.

**It is in this simplicity that lies its genius.**

This shore that offers its pebbles of sand.

Kudos to Shulman, especially, and all involved.

**All seems well on Magnolia Boulevard if this play is any indication.**

By Radomir Vojtech Luza  
Theatre Critic  
[www.NoHoArtsDistrict.com](http://www.NoHoArtsDistrict.com)

**Showtimes:**

Fridays and Saturdays at 8 p.m. and Sundays at 2 p.m.

**Tickets:** \$24

Seniors: \$18

Students under 26 (with student ID): \$10

Groups of 10+: \$16

**Reservations & Information:** (818) 285-8699 | [TICKETS>>](#)

**Where:** Secret Rose Theatre,  
11246 Magnolia Blvd.,  
North Hollywood, CA 91601  
(One-and-a-half blocks west of Lankershim Blvd.)  
(Ample Street Parking)