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About

Gallery

Contact

Services

Q Subscribe

< >

♡ 25

# "Hedda Gabler" at Antaeus

Published by Pauline Adamek at June 14, 2016

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Photo by Karianne Flaathen.

This is a review of The Generals cast.

When Ibsens thoroughly modern drama was first staged in Munich in 1891, the response from the critics was damning. They almost universally decried the play, declaring it was a presentation of a monster whereas the art of theater was supposed to elevate and refine.

In many ways, these contemporary critics were right about this psychopath.

The opening scenes of *Hedda Gabler* paint the eponymous anti-hero as an exacting, bitchy and unreasonably demanding woman obsessed with fashion and appearances. When we do meet her, we see she is cool and calculating, also a self-centered, insensitive bully prone to temper tantrums. An entitled person, Hedda struggles to stave off suffocating boredom and social entrapment.

Hedda is an emotionally complex character that most actresses would dream of portraying. Deliberately cruel, though driven by murky motivations to a series of unspeakable acts, this is a role you could sink your teeth into.

Jaimi Page gives a beautifully modulated performance as Hedda, displaying her brazen ambition and recklessness at just the right pitch. There's a metallic edge to Page's incisive performance and, at times, the character seems almost inhuman; surely a challenge for any actor.

The production is well cast and directed by Steven Robman, using a new version by Andrew Upton of the Sydney Theatre Company. The language feels highly modern and Robman has brought the setting forward by thirty years to the permissive 1920s.

In his play, Ibsen seeks to uncover the torrential river of destruction of human instinct that runs beneath the placid veneer of modern life.

Photo by Karianne Flaathen.



*Gabler*  
**Antaeus Theatre Company**  
Winnershim Blvd.  
North Hollywood CA, 91601  
(1 blocks south of Magnolia)



**Performances:**

Thursdays at 8 p.m.: June 16, 23, 30; July 7, 14

Fridays at 8 p.m.: June 17, 24; July 1, 8, 15

Saturdays at 2 p.m.: June 11, 18, 25; July 2, 9, 16

Saturdays at 8 p.m.: June 18, 25; July 2, 9, 16

Sundays at 2 p.m.: June 19, 26; July 3, 10, 17

**PARKING:**

\$8 in the lot at 5125 Lankershim Blvd. (west side of the street), just south of Magnolia.

**Tickets:**

(818) 506-1983 or [online here](#).

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**TICKET PRICES:**

Thursdays and Fridays: \$30.00

Saturdays and Sundays: \$34.00

**Pauline Adamek**

Pauline Adamek is a Los Angeles-based arts enthusiast with twenty-five years' experience covering International Film Festivals and reviewing new Theatre, Film and Restaurants.

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