



# Adelaide Theatre Guide

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## TWELFTH NIGHT

**Essential Theatre**

**Sevenhill Cellars**

Until 23 Feb 2008

Review by Richard Flynn

Nine professional actors present this Shakespeare comedy written for the twelfth night after Christmas – the celebrations for the Feast of the Epiphany (the Magi event), on January 6. It is bare-bones Bard and the Bard at his best.

Directed by Kevin Hopkins, costumed by Julia Musgrove (with more than passing reference to the Beatles era), 'Twelfth Night' played to a large crowd in the grounds of one of the Clare Valley's oldest cellars. No lighting – show began at 5.30pm – no artificial sound effects or body mics. Two guitars, the odd prop.

'If music be the food of love, play on!', Orsino (David Kambouris) commanded and sing they did – to the tune of "All You Need is Love" – with enthusiastic audience participation.

Diction and vocal projection were a triumph. And they have to be. This company performs 'Shakespeare in the Vines' in "some of Australia's most spectacular wineries and gardens".

Three women - Sophie Lampel (Viola/Cesario), Madeleine Harding (Olivia) and Amanda LaBonte (a very feisty Maria) - matched well the performances of Kambouris, Drew Tingwell (Sir Toby Belch), Don Bridges (Sir Andrew Aguecheek), Michael Jeffery (Malvolio) and Carl Nilsson-Polias, (Viola's hot hot twin, Sebastian).

Penelope Bartlau worked hard and well enough as Feste, but it's not really a part for a woman.

The ensemble aims to 'entertain, inspire and provoke audiences to think in a fresh way about their own lives.' Shakespeare's love of showing how un-Christian his fellow Christians can be towards their fellows (Malvolio, Shylock for example) is echoed when we continue the intolerance, the calculated viciousness, that the 'gulling of Malvolio' shows.

Only our targets may have changed.

Rating: 4.5 stars (out of 5)