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Gorilla Tango Theatre Serves Up 'A Star Trek Burlesque'

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Boobs of Khan: A Star Trek Burlesque conjures several uncanny story line expectations and projections at first glance. Held at the Gorilla Tango Theatre in Wicker Park—Kirk, Spock and the rest of the Enterprise crew are transformed into beautiful, sexy women, a bizarre consequence of the use of the Genesis Device. Oversized prosthetics, authentic (and at times unauthentic) Star Trek attire, glitter panties, and lots of sequined pasties offer an out-of-the-ordinary take on the 1966 science fiction franchise.

In short, Khan seizes this moment to attempt to make the crew his harem. Kirk's character instantly won over the audience with exaggerated diction and superb character personality. Only advanced technology can revert these changes, so the crew goes back to the future to visit "The Next Generation." Yet, before Data, Worf and Picard can help our heroes defeat Khan they must face an assimilating new evil and have at least a few moments with their new alluring female selves.

The show's concept revolves around "Geek Girl Burlesque," a combination of sexy and sci-fi entertainment which is all about fun and silly themes that people "geek out" about. Kelly Williams, PR Coordinator for GTT, says, "We enjoy the sexiness of burlesque but want to make certain it's tempered with tongue-in-cheek fun and a good time." Burlesque, regardless of theme or act structure, focuses on sexy evocative dialogue and nippy-witted humor (while maintaining a lack of complexity), all woven within short routines and comedy sketches. Flesh-colored costumes, G-strings, and pasties garnishing the female figure have been staples of the variety show format since the 1860's. Despite its common misconception and preconceived notions, burlesque was a sinfully rich source of entertainment, dance, and comedy for many Americans between 1840 and 1960. Icons like Gypsy Rose Lee and St. Cyr mastered the art of seduction through dance and striptease.

Today, with so many scene changes, GTT's creative team ran into a few difficulties when producing the show. "A challenge for this show was figuring out the placement of the dances within the show. As I directed the show I realized the comedy led perfectly into a dance. It takes a lot of courage to do a burlesque number and then stand onstage to deliver your character's lines in pasties and a thong," says Director Caitlin Costello.

GTT's Star Trek voyagers frolicked to the modern tunes of Benny Banassi, Kanye West, Daft Punk, and Beyoncé (an individual performance to a remixed "Run the World (Girls)" by far was the biggest hit of the night). At one point, the girls frivolously popped one another's decorative balloon costumes only to reveal barely-there lingerie while carefully balancing crystal feathered tiaras.

Across the board, *Boobs of Khan: A Star Trek Burlesque* makes for an unconventional, entertaining evening.

