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## Rowdy Fun With A Nude Hope

The burlesque scene in Chicago has become quite kitschy in the past few years, and the "geek-themed" burlesque shows are a recent novelty event that has been attracting sold-out crowds. It's a clever way to get two different niche markets - the burlesque scene and sci-fi enthusiasts - into one theater. The latest installment in the Gorilla Tango's Geek Girl burlesque-infused parodies, "[A Nude Hope: A Star Wars Burlesque](#)," is a telltale sign that the combination is working.

Loosely based off of "Star Wars: A New Hope," this comical romp through "a galaxy...far, far away...in a disco, circa 1977," follows a sexually frustrated farmer, Luke Skywalker, as he attempts to rescue the luscious Princess Leia from the sadomasochistic Darth Vader. Along the way, Skywalker receives help from a rouge she-hunk (Han Solo), a half-naked Wookiee (Chewbacca), and a senile but sensual guru (Obi-Wan-Kenobi). Sounds pretty ridiculous, right? Well, it is.



The sold-out crowd packed into the small Gorilla Tango Theater this past Saturday night hoot and hollered throughout the duration of the performance, clapping along as storm troopers (wearing very little other than their helmets) danced to "In The Navy" by The Village People, and cheering as Darth Vader used "the dark side of the force" to remove a Star Trek t-shirt off of a scantily-clad Trekkie.

I was seated near a few middle-aged men sporting Hawaiian shirts and ponytails who were members of a Star Wars meet-up group. Judging from their conversation, it was clear that they were die-hard Star Wars fans that had grown up in George Lucas's fictional universe. Would Greedo be featured in the Mos Eisley Cantina scene? How can you blow up the Death Star in a burlesque show? This was an audience as interested in the burlesque aspect of the show as they were in its authenticity to the 1977 film that it was based off of, and they were not disappointed.

While there were many standout moments during the course of the hour-long production, the most redeeming quality of the "A Nude Hope" is its playful tone. It was clear that the cast was having a blast up on stage, and the occasional improvisation and interaction with audience members helped enhance the liveliness of the performance. For a production that rests somewhere between a comedy routine, a burlesque show, a disco revival, and a sci-fi film, "A Nude Hope" is as unique as it is enjoyable.

*A Nude Hope: A Star Wars Burlesque runs 9:30 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays at Gorilla Tango Theatre (1919 N. Milwaukee) through August 27. Directed by Timothy Bambara, written by M.C Curran, choreographed by Rachel Singer and produced by Gorilla Tango Theatre's Geek Girl Burlesque*

— by Eric Behr