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## Princesses give Disney the diss in satire

PLAY REVIEW /// 'Disenchanted!'

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ROYALTY WITH ATTITUDE—From left are Abby Holland as Cinderella, Michelle Harris as Snow White and Taylor Bass as Sleeping Beauty in the recent Moorpark College production of the parody "Disenchanted!" Courtesy of Kaela Watso

There are those who will dismiss "Disenchanted!" as merely lowbrow entertainment, but there is much to like in Dennis T. Giacino's wickedly satirical off-Broadway musical. The show, which skewers the Disney princess trope, gives actresses a chance to make fun of the two-dimensional characters in such venerable Disney films as "The Little Mermaid" and "Beauty and the Beast."

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enchanted!” rips the tiara off of the ballgown-wearing, handsome-prince-yearning heroines of countless Disney films and gives each of these damsels a chance to vent about their characters. The Big Three of Disney princesses—Snow White, Cinderella (known as Cindy in the show), and Sleeping Beauty (aka Sleepy)—introduce other movie princesses who bemoan in song their individual character traits.

The girls are fed up with the Princess Complex, flexing their feminist muscles in songs that range from clever to mildly offensive. Nothing is off-limits in the show, which includes some potty humor and boob jokes, but it’s all in good fun as the audience at last Monday night’s sold-out performance attested with belly laughs and effusive applause.

The cast is highlighted by Michelle Harris as “perfect princess” Snow White and Abby Holland as Cinderella, both hugely talented singers, and comic actresses. Harris is especially good at infusing her kittenish character with Adriana Caselotti’s itty-bitty, twittery voice from the 1937 film version of “Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs” while Holland is a laugh riot with her facial expressions as she trips over objects and leads the other princesses in “All I Wanna Do Is Eat,” with its litany of pop-culture food references.

As Mulan, Lexi Collins complains about being the only princess who somehow doesn’t marry a prince, coming to the conclusion that she might be a lesbian (“Without the Guy”). Makenzie Ryan’s Ariel (from “The Little Mermaid”) complains about her flabby thighs in “Two Legs,” driving her to perpetually guzzle from a beer bottle. As Pocahontas, Crysta King makes a salient point in her complaint about her character not being presented with historical accuracy in “Honestly.” Kira Wefers’ Belle, from “Beauty and the Beast,” muses why her character, who comes from the north of France, speaks with an American accent and talks to inanimate objects (“Insane!”).

Savannah Blue Mejia plays Tiana, the Princess Who Kissed the Frog, boasting about being the storybook princess who broke the color barrier, while a hysterically arrogant Ashley Gilmore plays Rapunzel as a Wagnerian opera queen, complete with horned Veksø helmet, complaining about the unreimbursed commercialization of her character in “Not V’one Red Cent.”

Broadway tropes take a satirical hit as well. Jordan Haddad plays Jasmine from



wear ball gowns and get married.

The “Disenchanted!” concept would be inspired if it weren’t already dated. Disney Princesses 2.0 are already on the market, with feistier heroines in films like “Shrek” and “Frozen.”

With its ribald humor and suggestive lyrics, “Disenchanted!” works best for those who grew up in the pre-Belle days. That said, it was still a fun show to see due to the terrific performances by Moorpark College’s chiefly alumni cast.

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