



Tuesday, December 23, 2008

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## Review: Cowboy vs Samurai

Kevin Kwong  
Dec 16, 2008



Looking Glass Productions  
Fringe Studio  
Reviewed: Dec 11

American playwright Michael Golamco's *Cowboy Versus Samurai* is loosely based on Edmond Rostand's *Cyrano de Bergerac*. In his version, what comes between the protagonist and his love interest is not a large nose but his skin colour.

Some think competition.  
We think partnership.

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Thinking New Perspectives. CREDIT SUISSE

The play looks at racial prejudice from the Asian-American point of view, exploring how cultural differences and misconceptions can divide people. Director Paul Sheehan opted to take a light and humorous approach, focusing on two men's journey of self-discovery through friendship and love.

Travis (Eric Ng) and Chester (Gerome Samonte) are the only Asian-Americans living in the all-white cowboy town of Breakneck until the beautiful Veronica Lee (Patricia Chiu) arrives. The men are

instantly taken with her and devastated when they find out she only dates white men.

Chester, proud of his Asian roots, is perturbed by her choice while Travis accepts it. Travis complicates matters by agreeing to help his cowboy friend Del (Mike Paleos, right) write love letters to Veronica.

Golamco's script is sharp, thoughtful and witty and the cast did a superb job in getting the comic sense across. Samonte's Chester is a maniac stuck in an identity crisis. His



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obsession with all things Asian is both frightening and endearing. Paleos plays the goofy Del with both humour and sensitivity.

Ng is too intense, turning the shy and confused Travis into a moody brooder while Chiu's performance was marred by a lingering cough.

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