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Andrew Vail, July 2005

THE PLAY'S THE THING, BUB!



Shawn Postoff's biography reads like the screenplay of a Hollywood success story. He cut his creative teeth as a writer in his 20's winning awards for two of his short films. He then took an ambitious whack at retooling a Shakespeare classic that caught the eye of a pair of television producers. Before you could say 'Queer as Folk' he found himself in Los Angeles writing for, well, *Queer As Folk*.

'It was just a fluke. I was writing feature films about fun gay boys,' Postoff recalls of his journey to QAF. 'One of the stories landed me an agent. Out of the blue one day I got a call that I'd been medium listed to write for *Queer as Folk*. The Toronto producer had read two or three of my scripts and sent them to L.A. ' The rest plays out like a Cinderella story. The next thing he was on a plane to the coast to meet with the head writers of the show. 'I was really nervous and dazzled. They were trying to sell me on the show. Then at one point I asked, 'to clarify, am I being offered the job?' And they said 'of course, this is Showtime, we're not going to spend money and fly you out just for an interview.'

Much to the surprise of Postoff - and his agent - he was in L.A. for six months writing scripts for the third season. He ended up staying for the duration of the show, which comes to an end later this year. The timing of the end of QAF could not have been better. It gave him the creative elbow room to write his first play, *Sir Richard Wadd*, Pornographer, which debuts at this year's Toronto Fringe Festival. It became a creative workout for Postoff to explore his love of Ye Olde English - and amateur porn.

Sir Richard is unique in that it's set in the world of cyber porn, but the dialogue is written in iambic pentameter - classic Shakespearean verse. 'I wanted to take classical English and smash it together with porn and see what happens,' he explains. 'I'm a big fan of verse. The stage is the perfect place to privilege the word. This is where you can savour language and what it can do and how fun and acrobatic it can be.'

The play tells the story of the titular porn producer, his cadre of sexy performers - Tristan and Troy - and Kevin, the 14 year-old runaway who lands at his doorstep looking for work. "I want to take some of the Church Street clichés and lampoon them; the skater punk, the crack-addicted raver boy. Those kids have real lives and real stories. Part of what this play does is take the *Sir Richard* view and creates a paradox between Kevin and what he becomes as a result of his interaction with *Sir Richard*."

It takes a few minutes to get used to the rhythmic beats of the dialogue - and the sheer amount of it. But once you get pulled in, you're hooked. The prose are clever, witty, incredibly sexy and a delight to the ear. And the actors are a treat for the eye. In the scene I sat through during rehearsal, I had the pleasure of watching a verbal three-way. *Sir Richard*, Tristan and Troy spun a highly erotic wordplay that was, quite frankly, very arousing. Oh, and I should probably mention that they slowly shed their clothing as the scene progressed. Talk about foreplay... forsooth!



The cast: *Sir Richard* - John Healy. Tristan - Michael Facciolo. Troy - Rick Grayson. Kevin- Jefferson Guzman. John - Jason Fraser.

Where it's at: Opens July 7 th and runs to July 16 th at the Royal St. George Theatre, 120 Howland Avenue

For more info: www.SirRichardWadd.com

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