



Monday 17 June 2017

**RYDE YOUTH THEATRE NEXT PRODUCTION *GORGONS' BLESSINGS*,
WOMEN RULE IN AN ONSTAGE MEDIEVAL FANTASY**

*A young Queen with a vision
Her Prince, blind to the consequence of betrayal
The peasant soldier who loves him
The rich boy desperate for escape
And the woman ready to enslave him*

Ryde Youth Theatre's next production *Gorgons' Blessings* is something very different and definitely not one for their youngest audience members. Written by Artistic Director Suzanne Hauser this play responds to the negative gender stereotypes, gratuitous nudity and graphic violence in too much of the fantasy entertainment loved by young people.

"After binge watching the first series of that very popular fantasy TV show I was so livid about the depiction of women that I dashed off a synopsis of alternative medieval fantasy – one where the women are in charge and the boys are expected to be demure, obedient and marry whomever they're told to," says Suzanne. "I put it aside and didn't think too much about it until Ryde Youth Theatre moved into Westward Cottage and set up our own, very tiny theatre. Then it became a challenge; could I write a medieval fantasy for a young adult audience that would fit on our eight square metre stage."

The result is a tense, thrilling rollercoaster of intrigue, power struggle and sexual politics – with gorgeous costumes. The unconventional gender roles highlight and question how we portray men and women in fantasy.

Directed and designed by twenty-year-old Carla Hedley, *Gorgons' Blessings* combines some of RYT's most experienced artists with some incredible new talent. Bokkie Robertson plays Martinel, a young Queen desperate to assert her authority over much older and obstinate nobles, Gian Vignando plays Val, her young husband who has to make what he can of the political marriage made for him by his mother, and Louis Regan plays Val's younger brother Caildon, desperate to break out the expectations his society has of him. The cast is completed by newcomers Emily Hesper and Izabella Louk.

Gorgons' Blessings brings a medieval fantasy world to the stage, at once so familiar and like nothing you've seen before. The power struggles, betrayal, love, lust and rebellion are so intense in our intimate theatre you'll find yourself reaching for your dagger.

Gorgons' Blessings opens on Friday 21 July at The Underground, 8 Turner St, Ryde. All tickets are \$8.50 and are available from Sticky Tickets <https://www.stickytickets.com.au/55416>

Gorgons' Blessings is not suitable for young people under the age of 15.

Performance dates and time

Friday 21st July, 7.30pm

Saturday 22nd July, 7.30pm

Sunday 23rd July, 4pm

Friday 28th July, 7.30pm

Saturday 29th July, 7.30pm

Sunday 30th July, 4pm

Friday 4th August, 7.30pm

Saturday 5th August, 7.30pm

Sunday 6th August, 4pm

For further information contact Suzanne Hauser 0410 353 118

Attachments: Photos 1. *Gorgons' Blessings* poster – designed by Carla Hedley

2. Izabella Louk, Gian Vignando, Louis Regan and Emily Hespe



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