

Hi, I'm Lucy Hackett, your hometown radio theatre critic.

The Volcano Theatre Company is ushering in autumn and the spooky season with Jeffrey Hatcher's remarkable adaptation of Robert Louis Stevenson's nineteenth-century novella, Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. The creative production on the tiny Cobblestone Theatre stage is a luscious Victorian treat!

Dr. Henry Jekyll is a gentleman and physician who is exploring the conscious mind and the struggle of good and evil impulses, by experimenting with drugs. When he swallows one of his potions, he creates a variety of alter egos -- but the inability to control the results of his experiments lead to uncontrollable and disastrous results. Who is Mr. Hyde? Is he a murderous neighbor of Dr. Jekyll? A "split personality"? Or Dr. Jekyll's suppressed dark side?

I confess that I am not usually a fan of horror fiction or films, but I loved this production. Director Dana Cohen has cast some of the company's most accomplished actors, and most play multiple characters, moving easily from one role to another. Cohen also cast female actors to play male parts which only emphasizes the theme of the duality of human nature.

Jason Eves is charming and appealing as Dr. Jekyll so that the audience can share his horror as his experiment goes awry. Elissa Wilson masterfully plays two male roles critical to the story. David Peterson conjures up a peculiar character for Dr. Jekyll's lawyer and another for one version of Mr. Hyde. An altogether wild Mr. Hyde is played by Sean Mason as well as Dr. Jekyll's friend, Dr. Lanyon.

Alex Stazdins does a beautiful job as Elizabeth Jelkes who is entangled in a love triangle with Jekyll and Hyde and Maya Mireles plays Dr. Jekyll's butler who somehow brings sanity to the evolving chaos.

Director Cohen and her set, lighting and costume designers produced a remarkably creative and evocative experience – starting with the spare, deep purple set and moving us through multiple Victorian settings with minimal fuss.

Whether or not you are well-acquainted with the classic horror story, this presentation brings one delightful surprise after another. So, go! See Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde in Volcano.

It plays Friday and Saturday nights, plus Sunday matinees through October 3rd. Curtain time is 7:30 pm with doors opening at 7:00. Matinees play at 2 pm with doors opening at 1:30. Parental discretion is advised due to adult themes and on-stage violence. The tiny cobblestone theater seats fewer than 50 so we always recommend you get your tickets early. This is Lucy Hackett for Hometown Radio.