

A modern **Ophelia** as seen by Antonia Tancredi
by Mario Fratti

Ophelia is a very interesting, ambitious, original musical which is written by Antonia Tancredi(book and lyrics) and Jeffrey Weissman(music).

Ophelia, the character of the well-known Hamlet, in this musical (portrayed cleverly by Lynette Knapp), is now the tormented protagonist. Here, she is the one who takes the initiative, decides, and displays the courage of a new woman who is no longer passive.

After Hamlet(Chan Harris) makes a commitment to Ophelia, she defies her tough, jealous father Polonius(Steve Steiner), who at first defends the purity of his daughter, but then pushes her toward Hamlet, to become Queen, when it appears that he will inherit the throne.

The beautiful Gertrude(Cherilyn Bacon) the antagonist, tries to prove that Ophelia is now Hamlet's sister, through twists and turns in the plot. Kathleen(Alyson Reim) is Polonius's wife, but denies being the mother of Ophelia.

The lyrics are intelligent, poetical, and evocative. The text in contrast, is written in prose form, and at times Polonius seems too modern and hateful. The music by Jeffrey Weissman is excellent and memorable. This is a promising collaboration. (Wings Theatre, 154 Christopher Street).

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