

For the period: June 30--July 6, 2015

Home  
 News & Previews  
 Reviews  
 Complete Show Info  
 Calendar  
 Podcasts  
 Industry News  
 Links  
 About Encore

What's On  
 Now Playing

Select one ▼

See Times

-or-

Theaters

Select one ▼

Get Information

Sign up for our FREE weekly newsletter

Email:

Go

Privacy by  SafeSubscribe<sup>SM</sup>  
 For Email Marketing you can trust



## REVIEW: Adult Evening of Shel Silverstein

Summer Circle Theatre

"The Best Daddy" features Grace Hinkley as an excited Lisa, a child on her birthday and her Daddy, played by Kirill Sheynerman. He's about to reveal her birthday surprise--a dead pony. Or maybe her dead, fat sister. Hinkley is full of energy and convincingly plays the part of a child who goes from excited to devastated in the blink of an eye. Meanwhile, Sheynerman plays the daddy straight, despite the outrageous things that come out of his mouth.

"The Lifeboat is Sinking" brings Gronlund back on stage and pairs him with Hinkley as a husband and wife team. Hinkley's character forces Gronlund's into a horrible game in which the bed they are lying in has become a sinking boat and he must choose who to throw overboard--his wife, his daughter, or his mother. This is one of the best done skits of the night, with Hinkley raising the tension until the climactic moment and then changing the mood in an instant. Gronlund is stuck in one of those no-win situations and brings great expressiveness to the role.

"Smile" was the least effective of the scripts. Gronlund's Gibby is accused of being responsible for the 70s smiley face and the phrase "Have a nice day." The others interrogate him in stereotypical style and they slowly discover the other atrocities that he is responsible for.

In "Wash and Dry," Bonner's Marianne is in for a surprise. She's come to pick up her laundry from Sheynerman's George. It turns out her laundry hasn't been washed, but only watched.

The next skit is cleverly done and all four actors show how much can be done with just a few words. "Thinking up a New Name for the Act" has four scenes and in all of them, the only thing the actors ever say is "meat and potatoes."

"Buy One Get One Free" is the skit that reinforces that this is a play for mature audiences only. While there was strong language in earlier skits, this scene features two hookers who are selling themselves with a song that sounds suspiciously like Barney's "I love you." They sing of what they'll do for their customers and all of it rhymes with their names: Merrilee and Sherrilee. Bonner and Gronlund play the hookers and Sheynerman and Hinkley come along as potential customers, making their counteroffer in rap.

Throughout the 70-minute show, the ensemble moves quickly into place and twirls around Hernando Claros set piece that opens and closes to reveal different scenes and turns around to create a bedroom. It's effective and keeps things moving, though the one side didn't want to stay closed when it was supposed to.

Costumes were designed by Chelle Peterson and "mentored" by Angie Wendelberger, and were designed for quick changes between and even during sketches.

Director Paige Conway mined this script to make it more comic than dark, but she played up all the twisted aspects. There were no dead spots within the sketches and each scene had its well-defined space.

Opening night had the crowd laughing long after the show ended and they were laughs well-earned from his tightly-directed ensemble of fine comedic actors.

### SHOW DETAILS:

An Adult Evening of Shel Silverstein  
 Summer Circle  
 Michigan State University, Lansing  
 June 12, 13, 19, 20, 26, and 27 at approximately 10:00 p.m.  
 Price: free  
[Summer Circle](#)

## Twist your way into Silverstein's adult works

by Bridgette Redman

Article:9838; Posted: June 14, 2015 at 11:00 a.m.

Those who read his children's poetry always suspected that Shel Silverstein had a delightfully twisted mind. His works always had dark undertones in which children were eaten by cannibals and garbage stacked up to suffocate the whole world.

Turn that mind to adult topics and it makes for a late-night comedy that is darkly amusing and filled with uproarious laughter.

What can you expect from "An Adult Evening of Shel Silverstein" now playing on Fridays and Saturdays at Michigan State University's Summer Circle theater? You can expect bag ladies, rhyming whores, dead ponies and a threatening Laundromat owner. These are just some of the characters that show up in this seven-sketch play, performed by an ensemble of four actors.

It starts out with "One Tennis Shoe" in which a husband warns his wife, Sylvia, that she's becoming a bag lady. Imani Bonner is the wife who goes from offended to convicted to desperate. She's paired with Joshua Gronlund as Harvey who must confront his wife with this awful news and try to convince her to change.