# A Cool Place to Smoke 'Much Ado' Cast Makes Shakespeare Enjoyable

By Van Truong

H ave you ever been to a hookah lounge? If not, you should give it a try. Hookah bars can be a fun place for college students to hang out, play games, dance and chat with friends.

For people who don't know what it is, a hookah is an oriental pipe designed with a long tube connected to a container through which smoke runs.

My friends and I visited the Hookah Hut in the city of El Cerrito, just off Interstate 80 East toward Vallejo and Sacramento.

The location is the Pacific East Mall, a shopping center that houses numerous businesses. including a Ranch 99 Asian grocery supermarket.

You take the Central Avenue exit, then make a right at the first stoplight, then turn left into a parking lot to look for parking.

The hookah lounge is actually located upstairs in the back of a liquor store on the second floor of the mall. It's a pretty out of the ordinary place for a mini-club to be located and from the outside it doesn't look like much.

But looks can be very deceiving. There are two V.I.P. rooms that are quite big and filled with enough large blocky chairs for about 20 people.

Inside there is a very big flatscreen television you can use to play your own music for listening

The interior is dark but light enough for people to see. There is a curtain that separates the two V.I.P. rooms. About 2-3 hookahs are available

Once you're inside, there is a mini-bar where one staff member is burning loads of coals while flavoring them with masses of exotic and tropical flavors. Those flavors includes Sex on the Beach, peach, Coca Cola, strawberry, watermelon, apple and many others.

When the coal is flavored well and ready to go, other staff members come to pick it up and serve it to the clients who are seated in different rooms.

While puffing on the hookah, a friend of mine, Cynthia Truong, said, "Van, try this-peach is the best flavor I tasted so far!"

The peach was very flavorful. One of my friends, Bobby Huynh, was getting impatient. He kept saying, "Van! Hurry up, pass it down—it's my turn.'

The rest of the area is open with chairs and a couple of pool tables where patrons can show off their skills against each other.

Finally, there is small dance floor with a D.J. playing very loud music for people to dance to. The dance floor is very dark and can hold about 25 dancers.

Walking around the lounge. my friends and I saw a couple dancing non-stop. One of my friends, David Tran, giggled and said, "They cannot dance!"

And now to the main event which is the most interesting and exciting part of being at the hookah lounge: the puffing and blowing on delicious flavors of the

I'm not sure if puffing and

blowing out flavored smoke is bad for you or not. But I am pretty sure that it is not some sort of drug that damages your body.

It just looks cool when you're blowing flavored smoke at each other—and it doesn't affect your body like a cigarette does.

One warning though: if you hold in the flavored smoke for too long, you may get a little lightheaded. But the feeling will go away in a couple of seconds.

While you're enjoying the hookah, you can sit back and relax and chat with your friends and the other people around you.

Or you can play pool or dance on the dance floor. You don't always have to consume alcohol to have fun. Friday and Saturday nights

are when the hookah bar is the busiest and hanging out there with your friends is the most fun. The admission is \$15.

The hookah lounge is at 3288 Pierce Street in Richmond. For information call (510) 981-0200.

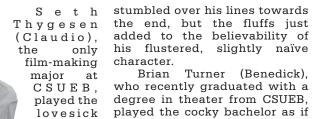
Much Ado, from page one.

just what she was going to do

Her performance was deadon funny, yet never overblown. Her time on stage was shorter than others in the cast, but she proved that longer isn't necessarily better.

Emmelie Turner (Don John) spoke her character's evil lines speedily. Parts of the play were lost because the dialogue simply couldn't understood.

Shakespeare's iambic verse is hard enough for some to understand, but at the quick speed Turner delivered comprehension was nearly impossible.



suitor

Brian Turner as Benedick.

his flustered, slightly naïve character. Brian Turner (Benedick), who recently graduated with a degree in theater from CSUEB,

played the cocky bachelor as if it was his own life mimicked in theater. His bold asides to the audience showed confidence and comfort at being on stage.

Costumes for the men consisted of military **Highland Theatre presents:** outfits while the

women were clad in World War II vintage dresses. Dresses from early in the play made reappearances later on. Masks of Disney characters

**Photo/** Richard Olmsted

of the period made a surprising entrance during a dance number. Props were kept to a minimum —drink glasses, gloves and plants —and the scenery barely changed throughout.

Overall, the cast of CSUEB's summer production of "Much Ado About Nothing" makes understanding and enjoying Shakespeare attainable. A night out for students that only costs

should be snapped up. The Highlands Summer Theatre production be performed Fridays and Saturdays Aug. 3-4, at 8 p.m., and Sunday, Aug. 5 at 2 p.m.

\$5 is almost unheard of and

Tickets, at \$10 for general admission, \$7 for seniors/ youth/alumni, and \$5 for CSUEB students, can be ordered via email from tickets@csueastbay. edu, or by telephone at (510) 885-3261 for reservations.

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By Heather Miguel

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Donations will be accepted from Monday, July 23<sup>rd</sup> through Thursday, August 9<sup>th</sup> at the following drop-off locations:

- → Research and Sponsored Programs Room LI 2300 (across from the Library)
- → College of Science North Science Building, Room N131
- → Academic Programs & Graduate Studies Warren Hall, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor; Room 859 → Department of Criminal Justice Administration - Meiklejohn Hall, Room MI 4069
- → Pioneer Bookstore (items to be donated that are purchased from the bookstore receive a 10% discount)

Tools 4 School is seeking sets of NEW (not used) school supplies, each intended for one child.

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If you have any questions, or need further information, please call Anne Wing @ 885-4212 or Jennifer Cabrejas @ 885-4006.

Thank you so much for your assistance – your kindness will be greatly appreciated!