

## ONE NIGHT ONLY: TAFFETY PUNKS *PARLANO ITALIANO*

**Taffety Punk Theatre Company and Faction of Fools Present:**

**Matthew R. Wilson in**

***The Great One-Man Commedia Epic***

**Two shows on Monday, October 12, 6 p.m. & 8 p.m. @ The Corner Store**

**900 South Carolina Ave SE Washington, DC 20003**

**All tickets \$10 @ door or @ <http://tix.taffetypunk.com/>**

**Taffety Punk Theatre Company** is no stranger to the Renaissance. Bringing cutting-edge Shakespeare to the masses means you have to be down with that bit of history and its theatre.

So it should be no surprise that the Italian Renaissance – and specifically the playful antics of the *commedia dell' arte* – are also on Taffety Punk's radar. *Commedia* is the form that gave us classic theatrical characters such as Arlecchino (Harelquin), Scaramuccia (Scarmouche) and Pantalone. Its physicality has also had a significant influence on the contemporary theatre

Taffety Punk is delighted to partner with **Faction of Fools Theatre Company** to present two special and intimate performances of actor/writer/director Matthew R. Wilson's *The Great One-Man Commedia Epic* on Monday, October 12 at The Corner Store.

What makes Wilson's take on *commedia dell' arte* so special? First, he's steeped himself in the study of the form and its traditional ten characters playing out stories of young love and family squabbles. Wilson even uses traditional *commedia dell' arte* masks, designed and hand-crafted in leather by the world-renowned Antonio Fava.

“What amazes me every time I perform this show is how the masks, characters, and themes that swept across Europe and revolutionized theatre during the Renaissance are still funny and immediately recognizable to audiences today,” says Wilson. “*Commedia* doesn't need to be ‘updated’ because those classic themes and characters still show us what is laughable about being human.”

But what makes *The Great One-Man Commedia* even more delightful – and challenging – is that Wilson does it all himself, with the aid of a versatile costume by Jessica Wegener. Playing both sides of classic comic double-handers, staging raucous scenes of full-company hysteria, and even dueling himself, Wilson creates the entire world of the *commedia dell' arte* on a bare stage

“The easy thing about doing a one-man show is that you always know when the whole cast is available for a rehearsal,” quips Wilson. “On the other hand, it poses some challenges when I have to profess my love for myself or duel myself in a sword fight. In reality though, I'm never alone because the audience is there. *Commedia dell' arte* has always had an intense partnership with the audience, and that ensures that each performance is fresh, fun, and totally new based on what happens in collaboration with the present audience.”

*The Great One-Man Commedia Epic* was originally commissioned in 2004 for Italy's 20th annual *Stage Internazionale* and is now premiering in Washington, DC, after touring theatres, festivals, and schools throughout the States and Europe, including performances in New York City and London.

Actor, writer, and director **Matthew R. Wilson** has performed in seven countries and seventeen U.S. states. He holds an MFA from the Shakespeare Theatre Company's Academy for Classical Acting and is a graduate of Antonio Fava's *Scuola Internazionale* in Reggio-Emilia, Italy, where he has been an instructor since 2004. He is an Adjunct Professor of Acting at George Mason University and has been a guest instructor/guest artist at schools throughout the country, including NYU, Columbia, and Georgetown. Recent Washington, DC, credits include Folger Theatre (*Henry IV, Part 1*), Capital Fringe Festival (*The Fifth Musketeer*), and Kennedy Center Theatre Lab (*Shear Madness*). He is a proud member of Equity, SAG, AFTRA, and the Society of American Fight Directors and is Founding Artistic Director of Faction of Fools Theatre Company, Inc. <http://www.matthewwilson.com>

**Taffety Punk Theatre Company** won the John Aniello Award for Outstanding Emerging Theatre Company at the 2008 Helen Hayes Awards. Taffety Punk's mission is to establish a dynamic ensemble of actors, dancers and musicians who ignite a public passion for theatre by making the classical and the contemporary exciting, meaningful, and affordable. Among its latest productions are a sold-out Bootleg *Troilus and Cressida* at the Folger Theatre and a successful run of an all-female *Measure for Measure* at Capitol Hill Arts Workshop.

*The Great One-Man Commedia Epic* is the first production of **Faction of Fools Theatre Company**, a not-for-profit theatre company chartered in Washington, DC, in 2009 to celebrate and explore the Italian Renaissance form of theatre known as "*commedia dell' arte*." Faction of Fools provides workshops and training sessions in *commedia dell' arte* and is planning an ensemble premiere for the winter of 2010. For more information, pay a visit to <http://www.factionoffools.org>.