



- FILE PHOTO

**HOT AND HEAVY:** Birgitte Solem and Mark Whitbread in *Fast Lane* at the Atelier.

# Debauched life in Fast Lane

By EVE EDMONDS  
Ottawa Sun

**I COULD feel the hangover creeping up as I watched *Fast Lane* — that throbbing behind the eyes, mixed with a morbid sense of remorse.**

This, by the way, is a compliment to playwright Francois Archambault.

*Fast Lane*, originally called *Cul sec* and translated by Shelley Tepperman, portrays a night in the life of a group of 20somethings. But for all the talk of "havin' a good time", we witness one extremely sad party.

These youths are shallow, crass and addicted to immediate gratification. On that score, however, perhaps they're not a lot different than generations before them.

The play opens to the relentless pounding of disco music combined with a hammering at the door. Finally, Sean (Edward Yankie) bursts into the apartment followed Mike (Mark Whitbread).

It's Friday night. The guys have come to pick up Brad (Henry Gauthier) before they head out for a night of drinking and scoring.

The three are a kind of bleak, '90s version of Shakespeare's Romeo, Mercutio, Benvolio. The difference, is that while Shakespeare's randy young men are out for a good time, they at least have a little charm and humor. These guys are just disgusting.

Sean (the Mercutio-type) is the instigator. While charismatic is too generous a word for him, he does have a kind of sex appeal. And sex is everything for him and Brad.

The two have an ongoing competition of how many women each has slept with. Mike (Romeo) has been out of the action, since he's "in love," something the others disdain.

The first third of the play sets the mood: The boys watch a porn flick and slug back a bottle of hard liquor. Once they're suitably primed, they head out to the bars.

Six hours later they're back. The guys have indeed succeeded in their mission and are returning to the apartment

with three young women in tow. It's soon apparent the gals are just as shallow, crass and obsessed with getting off.

It's during this second half that the play takes off, thanks partly to Julie (Marjorie Silcoff). Her giggly, prissy character is wonderfully nauseating.

But all the characters are strong, and the pacing is excellent. Director Gil Osborne has captured that burned-out kind of action that takes over a party that's gone on too long.

While this isn't a flawless work, it does raise some disturbing questions about that young, single generation.

Of course they all shouldn't be painted with the same debauched brush. As well, the same complaints of amorality and recklessness has been leveled at every generation before them. However, there is something particularly callous and brutal about these young lives. And if this portrayal is near accurate, we'll all in for a misty hangover.

**Review**

**FAST LANE**  
 Starring Edward Yankie,  
 Henry Gauthier, Mark  
 Whitbread  
 Directed by Gil Osborne  
 At: The NAC Atelier  
 through Nov. 11  
 Sun Rating:  
 ⚡⚡⚡  
 (out of five)

OTTAWA SUN  
 DATE: NOV 03 1995  
 PAGE: 31  
 AC: 1006