

THE DETERMINED DILETTANTE

A HUMBLE ATTEMPT TO PULL A REVERSE JANET FLANNER—MINUS
WORLD WAR II AND PICASSO.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 26, 2007

Prepare for boarding by ELISABETH VINCENTELLI
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Quick, you only have until Sunday to see the fantabulous *Wickets!* The show, part of [HERE's](#) Culturemart festival, is labeled a work-in-progress, but it's a lot more polished than many supposedly finished productions—some of them on Broadway—I've had the misfortune to see over the years.

The artistic team of Jenny Rogers and Clove Galilee (both in [Trick Saddle](#)) transposed [Maria Irene Fornes'](#) 1977 play *Fefu and Her Friends*, which takes place in a New England house in 1935, to a transatlantic flight in the early 1970s.

All right, this is where it gets totally genius: They reconfigured the theater so it looks like you're inside the plane. The audience sits in three sections and the cast is impeccably dressed and coiffed (note that the hair is now

three times the size it was in the photo) like period stewardesses—and these women are most definitely stewardesses, not flight attendants. They greet you at the door with boarding passes doubling as programs, navigate trolleys down the aisles, and offer you warm nuts and vintage copies of *Life* magazine. They're so in character that when I leaned back from my first-class seat to see what was going on in business, one of the passing stews whispered "Knees and elbows, knees and elbows" without breaking her glide. When the captain turns out to be [Peggy Shaw](#), in a fun little cameo, you're not even surprised anymore.

But *Wickets* wouldn't amount to more than an elaborate stunt—and a godsend to fans of both [Flying High](#) and Angie Dickinson in her prime, like, oh I don't know, me—if the new concept didn't work so well with Fornes' play. The text itself is beautiful and its surrealism gives it flexibility when it comes to the setting, while the ensemble cast superbly rises to the challenge; if you spend way too much time at the theater, as I do, you'll know this is a rare combination indeed. The production also embraces the play's unabashedly feminist themes without Nth-wave irony but with plenty of slinky humor. Also it's often, um, hot.

Have I mentioned that *Wickets* costs only \$15, and you don't have to take off your shoes?

POSTED BY ELISABETH VINCENTELLI AT [12:26 PM](#)

ABOUT ME

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I'm currently Arts & Entertainment Editor at Time Out New York, which requires me to have an opinion on everything the city has to offer.

LABELS: [CULTURAL POLITICS](#), [NEW YORK THEATER](#)

1 COMMENTS:

[Stacey](#) said... Absolutely Brilliant, saw it on Friday and it's a must see.