

CHELSEA: ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

This is NOT a holiday events roundup

Get your Ho, Ho, Ho's somewhere else (like page 27)

COMPILED BY SCOTT "BAH, HUMBUG!" STIFFLER

SHE KILLS MONSTERS

Secret Santa's got nothing on the juicy tidbits unearthed by average, unassuming Agnes. When she accesses the Dungeons & Dragons notebook of her recently deceased (and "totally weird") sister Tilly, Agnes is plunged into a world of hostile fairies, randy ogres, action/adventure violence and pop culture references. "She Kills Monsters" seems like a rock solid antidote to the relentless onslaught of satire-free saccharine that must be endured from Thanksgiving to New Year's.

Playwright Qui Nguyen and director Robert Ross Parker (the team behind Vampire Cowboys) bring their distinguished track record of comic book theater triumphs to the proceedings — with capable assistance from The Flea Theater's resident acting ensemble (The Bats). Geek Freak Bonus: Casey Iex Smith's Dungeons & Dragons-inspired art exhibit "Doomslayers" will be on display in the lobby before the show.

Through Dec. 25; Tues.-Sat. at 7pm, Sat. & Sun. at 3pm. At The Flea Theater (41 White St., btw. Church & Broadway). For tickets (\$25), call 212-352-5101 or visit theflea.org. Tues. shows are pay-what-you-can (one ticket per person; subject to availability at door only; Sat. matinees are \$10). Visit vampirecowboys.com.

BARTITSU WORKSHOP

What a difference the presence, or absence, of one little lower case "i" makes — especially when it comes to the long-lost (but recently revived) martial art of Bartitsu. British engineer Edward Barton-Wright created the unique form of self defense based on his time spent studying Ju Jutsu in Japan. Once back in London, he added elements of the French la canne method of stick defense, savate (French kickboxing) and British "scientific" pugilism. In 1899, Barton-Wright opened the Bartitsu Academy of Arms and Physical Culture in London.

Sherlock Holmes creator Arthur Conan Doyle named-dropped the skill in one of his Sherlock Holmes books, but inaccurately described it as "bartitsu." All these years later, the upcoming Sherlock Holmes movie (a sequel) stars Robert Downey Jr. as a manly man whose frequent use of athleticism and combat skills has more to do with Holmes' original literary description and less to do with the older, intellectual detective we're used to seeing.

Want to be part of the emerging Victorian Mixed Martial Arts superhero craze? Then attend a workshop taught by The Bartitsu Club of New York City and The New York Nineteenth Century Society. You'll also learn the ins and outs of this lost art — plus gain valuable insights regarding how to replace the Bartitsu tools of old (common 19th century items such as snuff boxes and walking sticks) with modern accessories/weapons such as cell phones and water bottles! A brave new world of self-defense in the face of unprovoked confrontation awaits!

Sun., Dec. 18, from 2-3pm. At The Society for Martial Arts Instruction (4 W. 18th St., btw. 5th & 6th Aves.). Suggested donation: \$10. At 4pm, renowned historic martial arts expert Mark P. Donnelly will offer instruction and commentary via Skype. For more info, visit nyesteampunk.com/bartitsu, nineteenthcenturysociety.org and sfmai.org.

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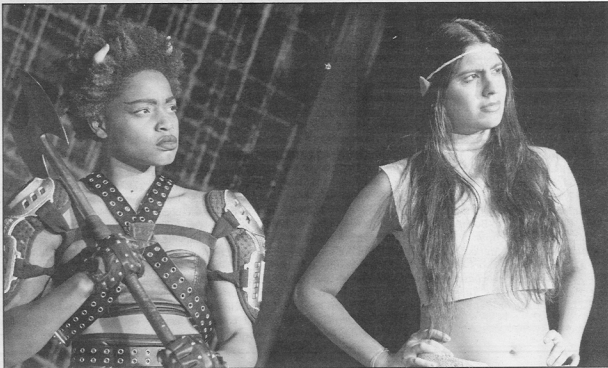


Photo by Joan Morris

Silent night, secret life: See "She Kills Monsters."



Photograph courtesy of the Keystone Academy of Duelling and Swordsmanship

Defensive art, lost and found: Bartitsu instructor Professor Mark Donnelly (right) demonstrating with Noah Morris.