

## 'Fools' as musical by Open Fist

**The essentials:** A tutor takes a job in a Ukrainian village and falls in love with his pupil, but everything works against him: The town is under a curse that makes everyone stupid. Neil Simon's 1981 comedy has been turned into a musical by the team behind "deLEARious": Phil Swann and Ron West.

**Why this?** Open Fist presented "deLEARious" two years ago and is now staging the Simon show's premiere. "Fools" was a notorious failure, lasting just a month on Broadway, yet amateur and school groups loved it for a while, and at least two previous musical versions have emerged. West, who cowrote the music and lyrics with Swann and also directs, says: "There is something about the town, and how they all love each other, that is really uplifting."

**Details:** Open Fist at Atwater Village Theatre, 3269 Casitas Ave. Preview 8 p.m. Friday; opens Saturday and runs 8 p.m. Saturdays and Mondays, 4 p.m. Sundays (except 7 p.m. this Sunday), through Nov. 17. \$10-\$35. (323) 882-6912, [openfist.org](http://openfist.org)



DARRETT SANDERS

**JAMES BYOUS**, center, stars in Open Fist's premiere staging of "Neil Simon's Musical Fools."