

'deLEARious' by Open Fist

The essentials: Shakespeare has had just about enough of King James I. The meddling monarch has him translating Scripture for a soon-to-be famous new Bible while expecting the Bard to sit back while Francis Bacon is brought in to tweak "King Lear." That's just part of this play-within-a-play about the creation of a present-day musical based on "Lear."

Why this? Shakespeare is mightily put-upon these days. He's also besieged in the touring Broadway musical "Something Rotten!" — now playing at Segerstrom Hall in Costa Mesa, then moving to the Ahmanson. "deLEARious" is by writer-director-actor Ron West — a stalwart of the Second City comedy troupe — and composer Phil Swann. Don't be surprised to find them as characters in the show. West directs the Open Fist production, which is a reprise of its 2008 production. "Reviving a show about a crazy, narcissistic king that is both sublimely silly and remarkably smart feels right for the moment," says Open Fist's artistic director, Martha Demson. "It's a marvelous antidote to the heaviness of this time."

Details: Open Fist at Atwater Village Theatre, 3269 Casitas Ave., L.A. 8 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays, 3 p.m. Sundays; ends Dec. 16. \$30. (323) 882-6912, www.openfist.org