

## **The Sign of Four — Review**

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Expanded Arts once again performed magic within its small, intimate space with an adaptation of Arthur Conan Doyle's *The Sign of Four*. With a minimum of props, expressive sound and music, brilliant costuming, and a wondrous cast taking on several roles (sometimes more than one in the same scene), Baker Street, India, and the docks of nineteenth-century London were brought to vivid life.

The adaptation, by Bart Lovins, successfully married the different points of view and location, tied together by the narrative voice of a charmingly diffident Watson, played by Steven Williams. Other actors included: Duane Domutz, pulling off a bravura feat by acting father Major Sholto, and sons Thaddeus and Bartholomew all in the same flash-back-and-narration scene (he also played Dost Akbar and filled in as assistant director and carpenter); Beth Hallo as a very funny Mrs. Mordecai Smith as well as the indispensable Mrs. Hudson and Mrs. Bernstone; Frederick Harris as Captain Morstan, Abdullah Kahn and Mordechai Smith; J. M. McDonough as a captivating Jonathon Small; Jeff Riebe turning in a young Sherlock Holmes filled with energy, enthusiasm, and wit; Pamela Sabaugh, delightful both as Mary Morstan and the grimy Wiggins (head of the Baker Street Irregulars); Jason Shaw filling in admirably as Mahomet Singh, a coachman, Jacobson and "Tonga's Personal Assistant" (Tonga himself being an Indonesian marionette and a key player in the tale); and Lee Winston, winning, especially as the bumbling policeman, Athelney Jones, Dr. Somerton, Achmet the merchant and Williams.

Beth Greene took on what must have been the arduous task of stage-managing this production, and also worked lights and sound. Kudos to all for a magnificent evening.