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Jake Revolver on the Case of Silly Noir

BY TEA KRULOS SEP. 11, 2018 3:45 P.M.

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Milwaukee Entertainment Group's *Jake Revolver*, *VCR Repairman* (a sequel to 2015's *Jake Revolver*, *Freelance*

Secret Agent) is about as ridiculous as the title suggests. Staged as a chaotic radio play, the cast constantly breaks the fourth wall, flummoxed with their own script. They dish out overcooked metaphors, non-sequiturs, slapstick and absurd dialog that flows like something from a book of Mad Libs.

The plot, which is loosely based on standard detective noir 101, follows former secret agent and transatlantic-accented Jake Revolver (Phil Stepanski), now working as a VCR repairman with his overqualified assistant, Top Load (Hayley San Fillippo). They meet a casting call of shady characters in the streets of San Noir after being hired to locate the magical Berlese VCR, including femme fatale Dearly Leading (or “Miss Leading”—get it? Played by Amy Geysler), suspicious Brit RB Hefft (Jim Donaldson) and hardboiled Detective Copper (Pam Scheferman).

The play never stops being silly. Jake meets a gang of sugar-addicted kids, a character reduced to being a literal talking head (Noble, played by Jason Nykiel), with interludes for increasingly despondent commercial breaks from the radio play’s scented candle sponsor (as performed by Laura Holterman and Marcus Beyer).

The script is written by local playwright Matthew Konkel and produced by Tom and Julie Carr, owners of the show’s venue, the intimate theater in the **Brumder Mansion**. Tom Marks directs the play and acts as the production’s befuddled Foley artist. The jokes fly by a mile a minute—some land, some zoom by. Don’t go into the play expecting Raymond Chandler; expect something more like Bugs Bunny.

Jake Revolver, VCR Repairman *runs through Sept. 22 at the Brumder Mansion*. Tickets available at brownpapertickets.com/event/3586109.