



Twelfth Night Bag&Baggage opens outdoor Shakespearean play

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The Hillsboro Argus

Bag&Baggage will present a world premiere adaptation of Shakespeare's "Twelfth Night," set in the roaring 20s style of F. Scott Fitzgerald's "The Great Gatsby," opening Friday, July 30, outdoors at the Tom Hughes Civic Center Plaza, 150 E. Main Street, Hillsboro.

The production starts at 7 p.m. Additional performances will be at 7 p.m. Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays through Aug. 14. All tickets are \$10.

During last summer's inaugural outdoor Shakespeare performance of "Romeo and Juliet," Scott Palmer, Bag&Baggage Productions' artistic director, flipped a coin and Alison Schrupp won the privilege of choosing the 2010 play.

Schrupp had a list of 15 Shakespeare titles and took more than 45 minutes to decide.

"It was a tough choice," said Schrupp. "'Macbeth' and 'The Tempest' are my favorite Shakespeare plays, but the outdoor setting seems to call for a frothy comedy with broad comedic characters."

At intermission, she announced her choice of "Twelfth Night."

"I was stunned," said Palmer. "It was the one play on the list that I was absolutely certain no one would pick."

Struck by similarities in themes between "The Great Gatsby" and "Twelfth Night," Palmer decided to set Shakespeare in the 1920s.

"Both stories take place near the sea," Palmer said. "They are both about love found and lost, about people creating new selves and hiding their true origins. Both works take place in a society where love is a game, where money is no object, and where hangers-on and poor relations live with the idle rich. Both works are concerned with wit and the way language can be used to hide and reveal."

Maggie Chapin, one of Bag&Baggage's core company members, is the production's assistant director and voice coach. Gregory Pulver, designer of last summer's "Romeo and Juliet," is doing both the costumes and the set design for "Twelfth Night."

The production stars Arianne Jacques (recently seen as Gwendolyn in last year's "The Importance of Being Earnest") as Viola, Amanda Washko (last summer's Tybalt in "Romeo and Juliet") as Olivia, Gary Strong (recently seen as Baptista in "The Taming of the Shrew") as Sir Toby Belch, Brooke Markham (recently seen as Livia in "The Woman's Prize") as Maria, and Dallas Myers (who played Mercutio in last summer's "Romeo and Juliet") as Feste, the clown.

In addition to the public performances, Bag&Baggage will hold its second annual Gala Dinner and Auction event on Wednesday, July 28. Tickets for the gala are \$40, and include a picnic dinner catered by The Venetian Bistro, beverages, and the chance to bid on 10 entertainment auction packages.

Proceeds will go to the TEN4ONE education scholarship program, which provided more than 1,000 free tickets to local high schools in the past year. The company hopes to double that amount during the coming season.

A chance to name the 2011 outdoor production will be auctioned at the gala.

Theater goers should bring something comfortable to sit on, sunscreen, a picnic and water.

Order tickets online at www.bagnbaggage.org or call 503-345-9590.

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