

ASOLO REPERTORY THEATRE



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 9, 2015

Asolo Repertory Theatre Presents
the 2015 New Stages Tour: *Twelfth Night*
an FSU/Asolo Conservatory for Actor Training Production

“Twelfth Night is a perennial favorite, and with its multifaceted plot mixing sweetness, sadness and silliness it is also about as surefire as Shakespeare plays get.”

– *The New York Times*

(SARASOTA, September 9, 2015) — Asolo Repertory Theatre proudly presents the sixth annual New Stages Tour, an FSU/Asolo Conservatory for Actor Training production of William Shakespeare’s ***Twelfth Night***, which will perform throughout October and November 2015. This season’s production will be directed by New York City-based director Jen Wineman, who helmed last season’s wildly successful adaptation of *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*. There will be a homecoming performance, open to the public, on Tuesday, November 24 at 6:30pm in the Cook Theatre, located in the FSU Center for the Performing Arts.

In Shakespeare’s timeless gender-bending romantic comedy, Viola, disguised as a man, falls head over heels in love with Orsino. But Orsino pines for Olivia, who only has eyes for Viola, who is really a woman. It’s madcap. It’s romantic. It’s complicated. While more than 400 years old, ***Twelfth Night***’s irresistible characters and their hilarious antics could be pulled straight from today’s primetime lineup. This fresh, fast and funny adaptation is set at a sleepaway summer camp where the tangled lovers are liberated from normal everyday life for a summer of mischief, mayhem, mistaken identities and romance. Shakespeare’s nobles and attendants are transformed into counselors, campers, supervisors, lifeguards, cooks and more.

"It felt important to give the play a setting that students can immediately recognize, since the

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idea of Shakespeare can be intimidating. We all have preconceptions about what Shakespeare is supposed to look and sound like – and it usually involves British accents and old-fashioned clothing," said Jen Wineman, Director of *Twelfth Night*. "We want to break that mold for students so they can actually see themselves in these plays and these stories. *Twelfth Night* has a mischievous spirit of abandon and freedom: there's so much love, pranking, and people trying to convince other people that they're crazy in this play. Summer camp is that place where you get to reinvent yourself away from the hierarchy of school and the real world, and of course it's exactly the place for a midnight prank, or a disguise, or an unrequited love."

Now in its sixth season, the New Stages Tour brings re-imagined, accessible 45-minute adaptations of Shakespeare's classics to schools and community venues throughout the state of Florida, from Miami to Tallahassee. Last season's tour was performed for nearly 14,000 students and community members. New Stages Tour performances are followed by post-show discussions with the cast. Asolo Rep's award-winning Education and Outreach Department also provides supplemental classroom materials, including behind-the-scenes videos, study guides and suggested activities.

"The New Stages Tour is a thrilling introduction to live theatre for thousands of students each season," said Producing Artistic Director Michael Donald Edwards. "For young audiences, these innovative and exciting adaptations make Shakespeare's exquisite words accessible and approachable, and they incite an appreciation for the arts in the next generation."

The New Stages Tour company features the entire FSU/Asolo Conservatory for Actor Training third year class. The FSU/Asolo Conservatory is a comprehensive three-year Master of Fine Arts graduate degree program that has been named one of the top 10 actor training programs in the country by *U.S. News and World Report*. During the third and final year of the program, the students join Asolo Rep's professional company of actors and have the opportunity to perform in mainstage productions.

The 2015 New Stages Tour will also feature the first-ever **Family Shakespeare Series**, with *Shakespeare in the Gardens* at Marie Selby Botanical Gardens on October 24, *Shakespeare Under the Stars* on November 14 at the Bishop Planetarium at the South Florida Museum, and *Shakespeare at Bay Preserve* on November 22 hosted by the Conservation Foundation of the Gulf Coast. This special series will include an introductory pre-show activity with the actors and will welcome the young – and young at heart – to the magic of *Twelfth Night*.

Now in its 57th season, Asolo Repertory Theatre is one of America's leading regional theatres and one of the few true repertory companies in the nation. Each season, Asolo Rep presents a diverse repertoire of newly commissioned plays, bold reinterpretations of contemporary and classic works, and provocative new musical theatre experiences. Under the leadership of Producing Artistic Director Michael Donald Edwards and Managing Director Linda DiGabriele, Asolo Rep's ambitious theatrical offerings and ground-breaking education and outreach programming engage audiences and ensure its lasting legacy for future generations.

Cast

(In Alphabetical Order)

Kevin Barber	Orsino
Mark Comer	Sir Toby Belch
Chris Alexey Diaz	Antonio
Ally Farzetta	Feste
Tom Harney	Malvolio
Josh James	Sir Andrew Aguecheek
Joe Knispel*	Fabian & Valentine
Kelsey Petersen	Viola
Jordan Ben Sobel*	Fabian & Valentine
Kim Stephenson	Maria
Evan Reynolds White+	Sebastian
Lisa Egan Woods	Olivia

*Appears in alternate performances

+Appears courtesy of Actors' Equity Association

Selected Creative Team Members

Director	Jen Wineman
Production Designer	Melissa Trn
Sound Designer	Matt Parker

Selected Artistic Bio

Jen Wineman is a director/choreographer based in New York City. Asolo Rep: last season's New Stages Tour of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Other Recent credits include the world premiere of her original translation of *Lysistrata* (Connecticut Repertory Theatre), *The 39 Steps* (Triad Stage), and the world premieres of the musical *Fable* (New York Musical Theatre Festival), Charise Castro Smith's new play *The Hunchback of Seville* (Washington Ensemble Theatre), and the musical *Bubble Boy* (American Theater Group)—which was written by the team that created the *Despicable Me* movies. Up next, Jen will travel to Ithaca College as part of the SDC's guest artist initiative to direct Naomi Iizuka's play *anon(ymous)*. She is currently developing a new 1980's style rock musical about zombies and love for an Off Broadway run in 2016. Education/Training: B.A. Vassar College, M.F.A. Yale School of Drama.

www.jenwineman.com

Asolo Rep's Family Shakespeare Series

In this special series an introductory pre-show activity with the actors will welcome the young – and young at heart – to the magic of *Twelfth Night*. Please contact each individual venue for ticket information.

Shakespeare in the Gardens

October 24, 1pm

Marie Selby Botanical Gardens

Free with admission to the Gardens/free to members

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Reservations recommended: www.selby.org

Shakespeare Under the Stars
November 14, noon

Bishop Planetarium at South Florida Museum

Adult \$10/Child \$5: buy one (adult or child ticket) get one child free

Reservations recommended: www.southfloridamuseum.org

Shakespeare at Bay Preserve
November 22, 3pm entry, 3:30pm performance

Conservation Foundation of the Gulf Coast

Free with reception to follow

Reservations required: 941.918.2100; www.conservationfoundation.com

Additional Public Performances

In addition to dozens of school visits, the 2015 New Stages Tour includes several community performances that are open to the public. Please contact each individual venue for ticket information.

Shadow Interpreted Theatre Performance

October 30

South Miami-Dade Cultural Arts Center (Culver Bay, FL)

Shadow Interpreted Theater utilizes specially trained American Sign Language (ASL) Interpreters who perform as “shadows” during a live stage production alongside voiced actors. Shadow Actors are integrated into the performance by mirroring *Twelfth Night* voiced actors, while interpreting the character they are shadowing in ASL. In this way, all audience members can enjoy the full richness of the theater experience rather than having to watch a single interpreter located off stage, and thereby missing much of the action taking place on stage. This is a cutting-edge arts offering that makes the arts accessible, genuine and fully enriching for all audiences. 786-573-5300; www.smdcac.org

Florida Theatre Conference at Santa Fe College (Gainesville, FL)

November 11

727.544.8915; www.flatheatre.org

Bishop Planetarium at South Florida Museum

November 13

www.southfloridamuseum.org

Current as of 9/8/15; for current listings please visit: <http://asolorep.org/education/new-stages-tour-2015>

Homecoming Performance Tickets

Tickets for the *Twelfth Night* Homecoming Performance on November 24 are \$25 and will go on sale online only on Saturday, September 26, 2015 at 12:01am and in person at the box office and by phone on Monday, September 28, 2015 at 10am. Tickets are available by calling or visiting the box office (941.351.8000 or 800.361.8388; 5555 N. Tamiami Trail). For more information about Asolo Rep and the FSU/Asolo Conservatory for Actor Training, visit www.asolorep.org.

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Sponsors



The 2015 New Stages Tour is made possible by lead sponsor Community Foundation of Sarasota County; Publix Super Market Charities; Asolo Repertory Theatre Guild; Cordelia Lee Beattie Foundation; Mandell and Madeleine Berman Foundation; Linnie E. Dalbeck Memorial Foundation Trust; Andrew R. Ferrell Foundation; Charles Henry Leach II Fund; Plantation Community Foundation, and the State of Florida Division of Cultural Affairs. Community Foundation of Sarasota County support is made possible through the Lola G. Hanna Fund, John and Tana Sandefur Foundation, John and Dorothy Brennan Charitable Fund, Walter Haskins Fund in memory of Stacey K. Haskins, and Cyril and Dorothy Veinott Memorial Fund.

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