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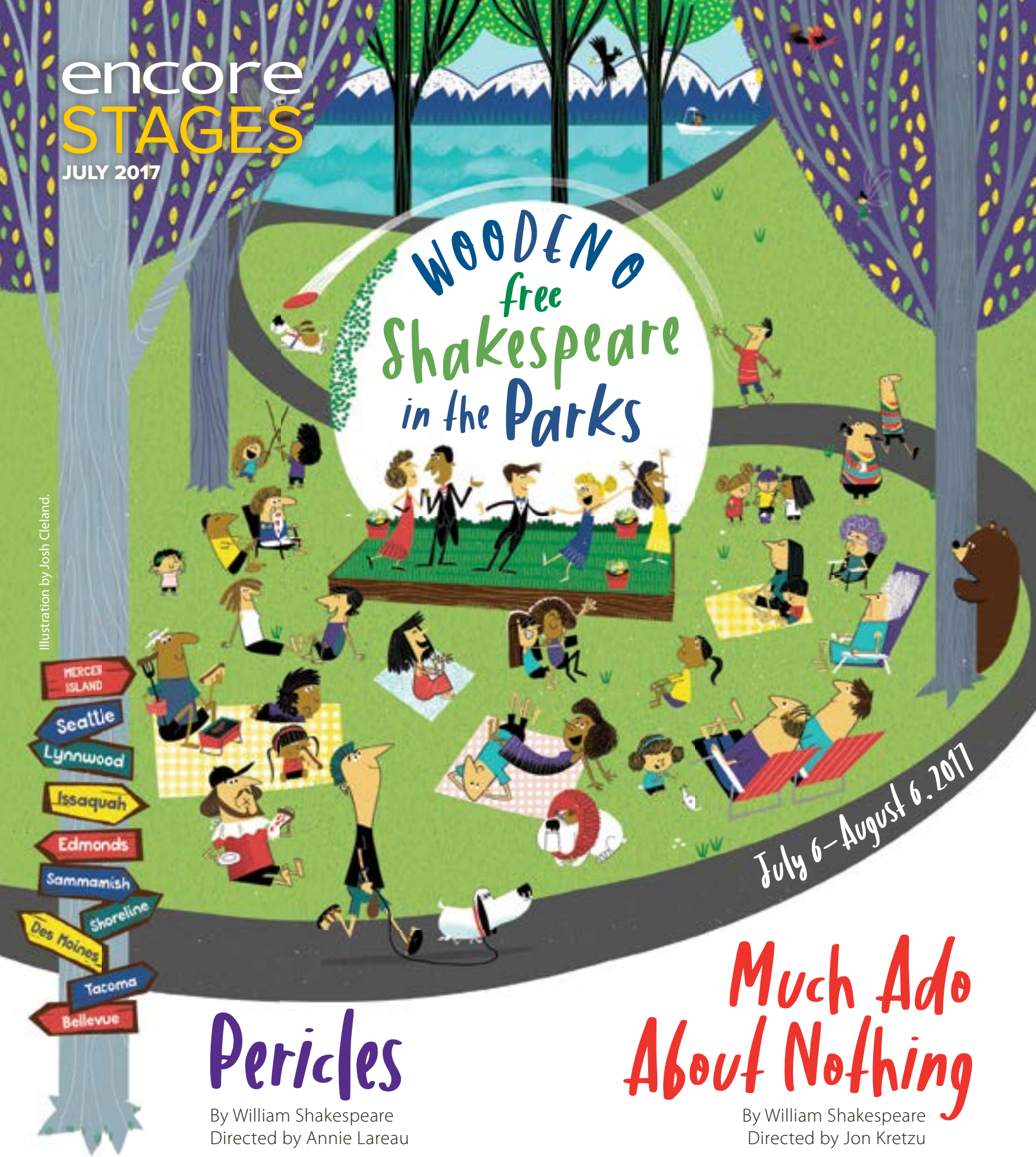


Illustration by Josh Cleland.

Pericles

By William Shakespeare
Directed by Annie Lareau

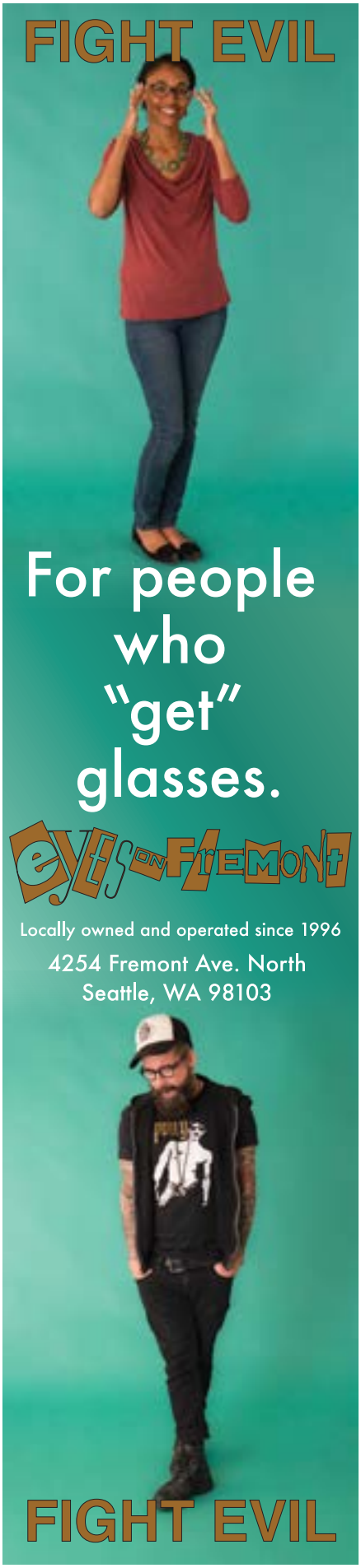
Much Ado About Nothing

By William Shakespeare
Directed by Jon Kretzu

SEATTLE SHAKESPEARE

2017–2018 INDOOR SEASON

Julius Caesar
The Government Inspector
Timon of Athens
The Merchant of Venice
Shakespeare in Love



July 2017
Volume 13, No. 7

encore arts programs

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encore STAGES

SUMMER 2017

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Encore Stages is an Encore Arts Program that features stories about our local arts community side-by-side with information about performances. Encore Arts Programs are publications of Encore Media Group. We also publish City Arts, the monthly arts & culture magazine, and specialty publications, including the Offical Seattle Pride Guide and the SIFF Guide and Catalog. Learn more at encoremediagroup.com

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Seattle Repertory Theatre

Seattle Shakespeare

Seattle Theatre Group

Taproot Theatre Company

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Putting Classics to the Test

Producing plays from the canon to contemporary effect

Sally Brady, Jeffrey Azevedo, Cherdonna, and Samie Spring Detzer in *Cherdonna's Doll's House*. *Photo by Jeff Carpenter.*

Seattle theatres are taking on classics through contemporary lenses.

Henrik Ibsen's play, *A Doll's House*, premiered in 1879 in Copenhagen. It was Christmastime, and audiences may have been expecting something a bit more festive. Instead, they were presented with a shockingly feminist play, one where women make decisions and have agency. Over the intervening decades, the play has become a classic and is performed and adapted all over the world. Just a few months ago, the Washington Ensemble Theatre presented *Cherdonna's Doll's House*, an adaptation of *A Doll's House* featuring beloved Seattle bio queen Cherdonna Shinatra. Director Ali Mohamed el-Gassier was excited to see how the original play would bend and break with Cherdonna in the mix. "If you love a classic, test it," he says. "F**k with it to see if it's still relevant. Truly engage with it."

There are many reasons that classics endure. Many are beautiful wrought, satisfyingly structured, and engage themes that remain relevant far beyond their initial premiere. There's artistic and fiscal value for theatres to produce work well-loved works from the cannon. Seasoned theatre-goers have seen many plays by Miller, Shakespeare, Ibsen, O'Neill, Williams, and more. Reinterpretations and an new adaptations of classics bring new light to characters many theatre audiences know well and can challenge us to see

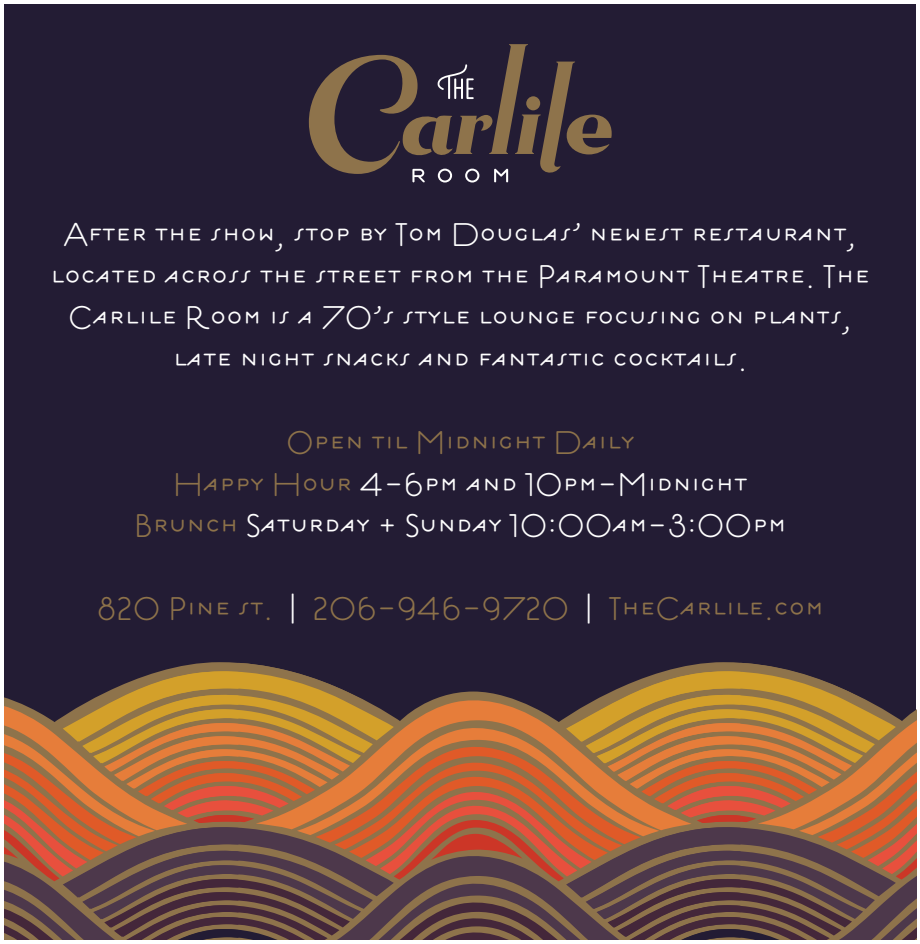
new perspectives in old stories.

Seattle Shakespeare Theatre produces almost exclusively classic work, mostly by Shakespeare. But the productions are hardly ever styled in a straightforward Elizabethan manner. "This is still contemporary theatre," says George Mount, Seattle Shakespeare Theatre's artistic director. "We are speaking directly to an audience that night, a new audience every night. Each night is fresh. It's never the same. Every single performance is new."

Earlier this year, Seattle Shakespeare Company presented *Bring Down the House*. Adapted by Rosa Joshi and Kate Wisniewski, it was an epic 2-part adaptation of Shakespeare's *Henry VI* trilogy. Produced in partnership with the upstart crow collective, the cast was entirely women. "Here we were highlighting power structures," notes Mount, "and we were tech-ing the production the day the Women's March was taking place. There were shouts of power right outside our doors." The play premiered in 1592. Thrilling at the time, the history play deals with the English political system torn apart by personal squabbles and deepening jealousies. The play is hundreds of years old, but it is still relevant.

Mining and adapting classic stories for their modern relevance is itself a classic idea. "It's what Shakespeare was doing at the time," Mount says. "What Aeschylus was doing." The ancient Greek poets wrote dramatized adaptations

The cast of *Medea*. *Photo by John Ulman.*



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Alexandra Tavares in the titular role in Seattle Shakespeare Company's production of *Medea*, directed by Kelly Kitchens in fall 2016. *Photo by John Ulman.*

of mythology to engage the issues and theme with which society was wrestling. Through that process, new ideas and perspectives within the story were brought to light. "We have to keep doing that," Mount says of stories audiences know by heart. "Take them apart and reimagine them. We have to look at each play afresh and askance."

ACT Theatre's Artistic Director John Langs looks to past works to see the future. "Producing the classics assists us in our vision of finding the classic theatre of tomorrow," he says. This fall, Langs directs *The Crucible* at ACT. The classic Miller play about the Salem witch trials that is really about the dangers of McCarthyism stunned audiences when it premiered in 1953. *The Crucible* has now become a central work in the canon of American drama. The production at ACT this fall will be a new interpretation. "Classics endure. They deal with issues that come around again and again" says Langs. The production will draw parallels between the American political landscape that from 1953 and today. "The theme of a community turning in on itself and targeting its own is something our

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SEATTLE SHAKESPEARE

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Our name is a misnomer when you start to consider it. In 1991, the company set out to produce professional productions of Shakespeare's works for the Seattle area. But time has a way of changing things. After more than 25 years of producing the classics, our reach and influence has expanded well beyond the confines of the city.

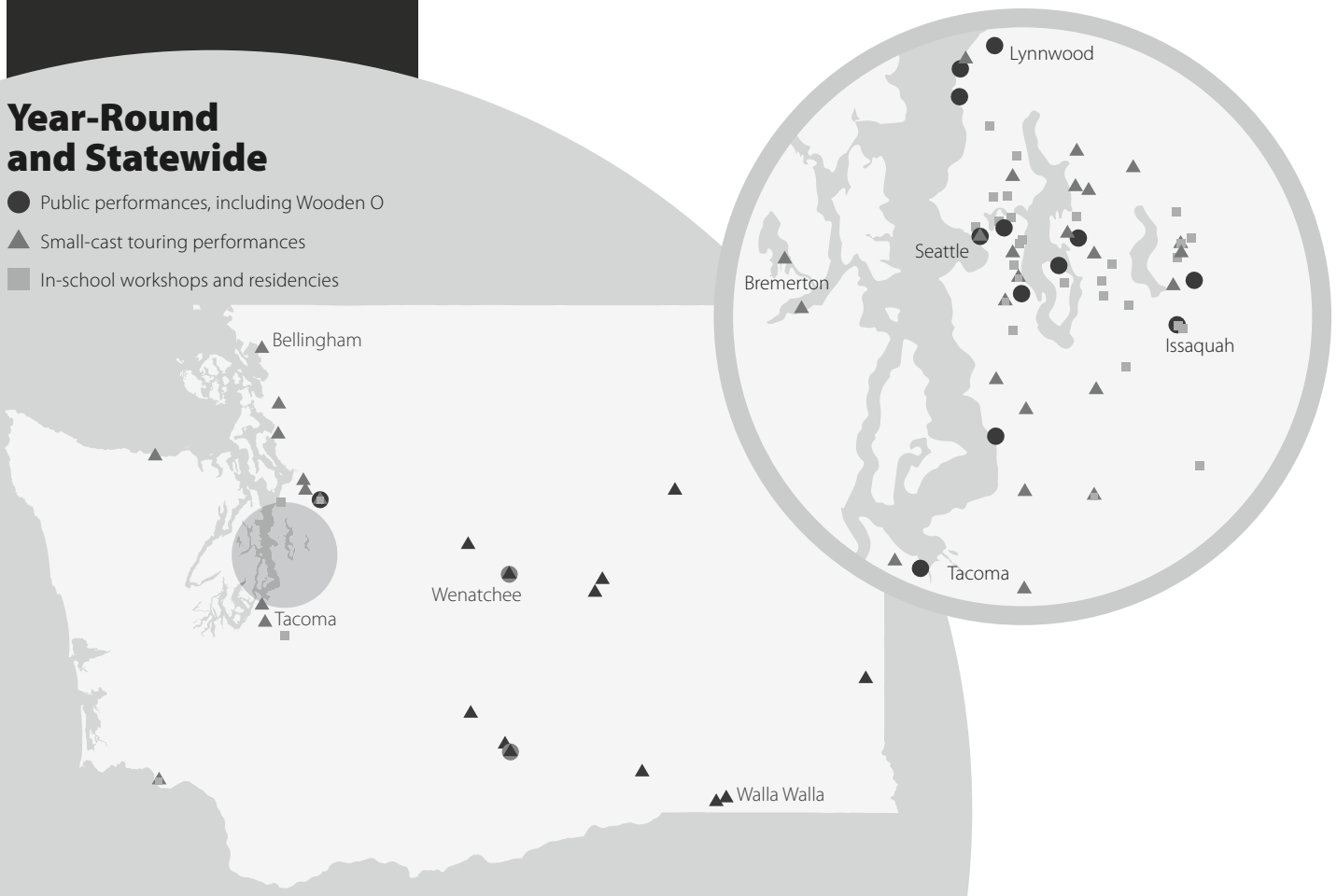
You might be surprised to learn that the majority of the people who see our shows don't live in the city of Seattle at all. In fact, you may be one of those people! This summer more than a third of the people who attend a Wooden O production will come from outside the Seattle-city area. Many who attend a Wooden O show don't ever see any other Seattle Shakespeare Company shows. They just have an annual tradition of free Shakespeare in the park each summer. And that's great!

Seattle Shakespeare Company's touring productions perform in 14 Washington State counties. That's a lot of time spent on the road! Next year we expect to reach 15,000 middle school and high school students through 60 performances of our small-cast productions of the classics.

While our base of operation is in Seattle with our 5 indoor productions, most of our audience is lives beyond the city limits. Maybe it's time to rethink our name . . .

Year-Round and Statewide

- Public performances, including Wooden O
- Small-cast touring performances
- In-school workshops and residencies



PLOT SYNOPSIS

Pericles is presented to the audience by Gower, who introduces Antiochus, king of Antioch, and his daughter, with whom the king is having an incestous affair. Pericles comes to ask for her hand in marriage and inadvertantly discovers their secret. Antiochus sends an assassin to pursue him back to Tyre. Pericles hides in Tarsus, where he is welcomed by Queen Dionyza and saves the city from famine. But his enemies are once again in pursuit. As Pericles escapes, he is shipwrecked in a storm. Washed ashore near Pentapolis, he enters in a joust for the hand of the king's daughter, Thaisa. Pericles wins the tournament and is married to the princess despite his apparently lowly origins, but when he receives the news that he must return to Tyre and reclaim his throne, he is forced to admit his true identity. En route, Thaisa gives birth to a daughter, Marina, and then she dies. Pericles entrusts the care of his baby to his old friend, Dionyza.

When Marina is grown, Dionyza becomes jealous of her beauty, which rivals that of her own daughter. She tries to have her killed, but Marina is abducted by pirates. The pirates sell her to a brothel in Mytelene, where she convinces the owners that she is more usefully employed as a seamstress. She even converts the governor, who has been a regular customer, to a virtuous life.

Pericles is told that his daughter is dead and vows to go into mourning for the rest of his life. The governor hears of Pericles' depression and sends Marina to cheer him up. Pericles recognizes his daughter by her resemblance to his wife. The goddess Diana appears in a dream, sending father and daughter to Ephesus, where they find Thaisa alive. After years of extraordinary adversity, the family is finally reunited.

Adapted from ***Shakespeare's Genealogies*** by Vanessa James

SEATTLE SHAKESPEARE

Pericles

By William Shakespeare

CAST

Gower / Diana
Alana Cheshire

Lychordia / Bawd / 2nd Lady of Ephesus
Heather Hawkins

Marina / 2nd Lady in Waiting / 1st Lady of Ephesus
Anastasia Higham

Thaisa
Tracy Hyland*

Lysimicus / 1st Lord of Tyre / Knight / 1st Prince
Arjun Pande

Antiochus / Simonides / Boult
David Pichette*

Leonine / 2nd Lord of Tyre / Knight / 1st Sailor / Tyrian Sailor
Jackie Pomeroy

Pericles
Lorenzo Roberts*

Thailard / 2nd Fisherman / Knight / 2nd Sailor / 3rd Pirate / Lord of Mytilene
David Rock

1st Fisherman / Philoten / Cerimon / 2nd Pirate
Cahillane Shine

Helicanus / 3rd Fisherman / Pander
Brian Simmons

Escanes / Dionyza
Nikki Visel

Daughter of Antiochus / Philemon / 1st Lady in Waiting
Maile Wong

* Member of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

PRODUCTION TEAM

Director
Annie Lareau

Scenic Designer
Craig B. Wollam

Costume Designer
Kelly McDonald

Composer / Music Director
Matt Reed

Sound Designer
Meghan Roche

Properties Designer
Robin Macartney

Fight Choreographer
Evan Whitfield

Choreographer
Crystal Dawn Munkers

Assistant Director
Kayla Walker

Stage Manager
Louise Butler*

Assistant Stage Manager
Caitlin Denney-Turner

Technical Director
Adrian Delahunt

SPECIAL THANKS

American Life Inc, Amy Allsopp, Jon Lutyens

The taking of pictures or the making of recordings of any kind during the performance is strictly prohibited.

Much Ado About Nothing

By William Shakespeare

CAST

Ursula / Watch
LoraBeth Barr

Balthasar / Watch
Israel Bloodgood

Watch / Maid
Maddie Brantz

Claudio
Spencer Funk

Beatrice
Keiko Green*

Leonato
Frank Lawler

Hero
Meranda Long

Don Pedro
Alex Matthews

Antonio
Corey McDaniel

Conrade
Rafael Molina

Dogberry
George Mount*

Don John / Verges
Conner Neddersen

Sexton / Jazz Singer / Maid
Cass Neumann

Benedick
MJ Sieber*

Margaret / Watch
Hannah Rachel Tamkin

Priest / Messenger
Mark Joseph Trammell

Borachio
Steve Vanderzee

* Member of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

PRODUCTION TEAM

Director
Jon Kretzu**

Scenic Designer
Craig B. Wollam

Costume Designer
Jocelyne Fowler

Sound Designers
Evan Mosher
Robertson Witmer

Properties Designer
Robin Macartney

Dialect Coach
Alyssa Keene

Stage Manager
Emma Pihl

Assistant Stage Manager
Shane Unger

Technical Director
Adrian Delahunt

** Member of the Stage Directors and Choreographers Society, Inc.

SPECIAL THANKS

American Life Inc

SDC

The Director is a member of the Stage Directors and Choreographers Society, a national theatrical labor union.

The taking of pictures or the making of recordings of any kind during the performance is strictly prohibited.

PLOT SYNOPSIS

Don Pedro and his brother, Don John, are guests in the house of Leonato. In their company are Don Pedro's young Italian friends, Claudio and Benedick. Claudio confesses to Benedick that he is in love with the governor's daughter, Hero. Benedick is a confirmed bachelor but keeps up a bantering relationship with Hero's cousin, Beatrice. Beatrice and Benedick both decry romance and are happiest when engaged in a vigorous verbal combat with each other.

Don Pedro undertakes to woo Hero for the shy Claudio and to effect a match between Beatrice and Benedick, who he believes, despite all appearances, are really in love. Don John hears about his plans and plots to destroy everybody's happiness. He convinces Don Pedro, by a trick, that Hero has been unfaithful to her lover, and so Claudio repudiates her at the altar. Beatrice and Benedick do not believe the allegations and convince her father of her innocence. They tell everyone that Hero has died of grief and set out to clear her good name.

Don Pedro's scheme to bring Beatrice and Benedick together fares rather better. By convincing each that they are loved by the other, the two are finally able to admit their real feelings.

Meanwhile, Constable Dogberry and his night watch have apprehended two of Don John's men as they were overheard discussing their master's plot to defame Hero. They are brought before Leonato and confess the crime. Claudio makes amends by marrying Leonato's neice. After a double wedding with Beatrice and Benedick, Claudio's bride reveals herself as the living Hero, who generously forgives her faithless husband. As everyone celebrates, Don John is arrested and awaits sentencing.

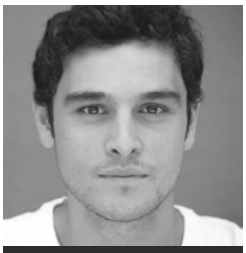
Adapted from ***Shakespeare's Genealogies*** by Vanessa James

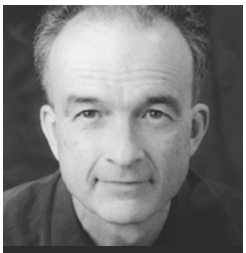
Alana Chesire

Heather Hawkins

Anastasia Higham

Tracy Hyland


Arjun Pande


David Pichette

CAST: PERICLES

Alana Chesire
Gower / Diana

Alana is excited to make her Pacific Northwest debut with Wooden O! Originally from Atlanta, GA, Alana holds a BS in Vocal Performance and Theatre from Indiana University, and is currently a 2nd year in the University of Washington's MFA Professional Acting Training Program. Some favorite professional roles include Celia in *As You Like It*, Sunny Freitag in the *The Last Night of Ballyhoo,* and Janet in *The Rocky Horror Show*. Alana recently became a 200-hr Registered Yoga Teacher through the Yoga Alliance, and is getting married to her best friend and favorite nerd at the end of this summer.

Heather Hawkins
Lychordia / Bawd / 2nd Lady of Ephesus

Heather has been a Seattle-based performer for the past 25 years. Seattle Shakespeare Company/Wooden O: *As You Like It, Othello, The Merry Wives of Windsor, A Midsummer Night's Dream, Julius Caesar,The Tempest*. Seattle Public Theater: *Gideon's Knot* (2014 Seattle Times Footlight Award and 2014 Gregory Award nominee for Best Actress), *Amadeus, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead, Mauritius, The Sweetest Swing in Baseball, End Days, The Winter's Tale, Betraya*l. Arts West: *Angry Housewives, The Little Dog Laughed, Shirley Valentine, Distracted, Love Song, As Bees in Honey Drown* (2006 Seattle Times Footlight Award). Heather has also been seen and heard at Sandbox Radio, Book-It Repertory Theatre, Taproot Theatre, Village Theatre, ACT Theatre, and Theatre Anonymous. Her favorite role remains wife and mom in *The Life and Times of Duncan, Tessa, and Jay Weinland.*

Anastasia Higham
Marina / 2nd Lady in Waiting / 1st Lady of Ephesus

Anastasia was last seen on the Wooden O stage in *The Tempest* and on Seattle Shakespeare Company's main stage in *Romeo and Juliet.* She also traveled with Seattle Shakespeare Company's educational tour for three years, bringing *Julius Caesar, Othello, Macbeth*, and *Romeo and Juliet* to students across the state. Previous work includes Seattle Children's Theatre's *Into the West; Proof* and *Our Town* with Strawberry Theatre Workshop; Seattle Repertory Theatre's *Circle Mirror Transformation*; Island Stage Left's *Cymbeline*; ACTLab's *As You Like It;* and Annex Theatre's *Horse Girls,* for which she won a Gregory Award for Outstanding Supporting Actress. Next up, she will be reprising her role from Theatre22's *Can't Talk Right Now* in their newest installment of the *Signal Loss* series, *Sings the Hits.*

Tracy Hyland
Thaisa

Tracy is delighted to return for another season of Wooden O, where she has previously played Lady Macbeth in *Macbeth* (2011) and Ophelia in *Hamlet* (2006). For Seattle Shakespeare Company, Tracy has also appeared in *The Winter's Tale* and *Bring Down the House*, for which she took over the role of Warwick last season. Other stage credits include ACT Theatre, Seattle Children's Theatre, Chicago Shakespeare Theatre, upstart crow collective, New Century Theatre Company, Seattle Public Theater, Strawberry Theatre Workshop, Island Stage Left, 14/48 Projects, and Montana Shakespeare in the Parks. She is also featured in the films *Switchmas, Dark Dungeons*, and *Danger Diva*. Tracy is married to actor/director Tim Hyland and mother to their dear Gus.

Arjun Pande
Lysimicus / 1st Lord of Tyre / Knight / 1st Prince

Words alone cannot express how excited Arjun is to be performing for you, or how happy he is that you came to see the show. Previous Seattle Shakespeare Company credits include *The Taming of the Shrew* and *Romeo and Juliet* (statewide tour), *Hamlet* (Wooden O), *The Tempest* (statewide tour), and *The Comedy of Errors*. Other local credits include *Treasure Island* and *Emma* at Book-It Repertory Theatre and *Guards at the Taj* at ACT. Arjun received a BA in Theater and Performing Arts at Brown University.

David Pichette
Antiochus / Simonides / Boult

Previously with Seattle Shakespeare Company and Wooden O, David has been King Henry IV in *Henry IV parts 1 and 2*, Polonius in *Hamlet*, Jaques in *As You Like It,* and Don Armado in last summer's *Love's Labour's Lost.* At Utah Shakespeare Festival he played The Fool in *King Lear*, Malvolio in *Twelfth Night*, Gremio in *The Taming of the Shrew*, and Justice Shallow in *Henry IV part 2*. Recently he has been seen in *Death of a Salesman* (Willy Loman) at ArtsWest, *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrob*e (Mr. Beaver) with The Seattle Children's Theatre, and *Pajama Game* (Mr. Hasler) at The 5th Avenue Theatre.

Jackie Pomeroy
Leonine / 2nd Lord of Tyre / Knight / First Sailor / Tyrian Sailor

Jackie is an actor, lyricist, and certified baller. Recent credits include Pater in Theater Schmeater's production of *Trump the King*, directed by Joel Waage; an ensemble role in Seattle Shakespeare's production of *Measure for Measure*, directed by Desdemona Chiang; and Bax in O.G. Theater's *Bix & Bax's Box*, directed by J.R. Yancher.

Lorenzo Roberts
Pericles

Lorenzo has appeared in *Henry IV Part 1*(Wooden O) and *Othello* (Seattle Shakespeare Company). As a member of ACT Theatre's 2016 Inaugural Core Company, Lorenzo appeared in *Dangerous Liaisons, The Royale* and *The Mystery of Love and Sex*. Other credits: *As You Like It* (Folger Shakespeare Theatre) and *Blues for Mr. Charlie*(The Williams Project). He received a BFA in Acting from the University of North Carolina School of the Arts.

David Rock
Thailard / 2nd Fisherman / Knight / 2nd Sailor / 3rd Pirate / Lord of Mytilene

David is proud and excited to be making his Wooden O debut after recently graduating from Cornish

College of the Arts with a BFA in Musical Theatre. He has been enamored with Shakespeare since he was in grade school and his previous roles include Leontes in *The Winter's Tale* at Cornish College of the Arts as well as Tranio in Half Moon Bay Shakespeare Company's production of *The Taming of the Shrew*. Other roles include Guido Contini in *Nine the Musical*, Mark Cohen in *Rent*, and Berger in *Hair*. When he is not acting, David plays guitar and looks for ways to spread mental health awareness within our community.

Cahillane Shine
1st Fisherman / Philoten / Cerimon / 2nd Pirate

Cahillane returns to Wooden O's outdoor stages for the fifth summer, having previously joined the casts of *Macbeth, Richard III, A Midsummer Night's Dream,* and *The Merchant of Venice*. She has toured nationally with the Montana Repertory Theatre and worked regionally with such companies as Tennessee Shakespeare Company, Idaho Repertory, and Book-It Repertory Theatre. Cahillane is a Seattle, WA native and a graduate of the University of Montana.

Brian Simmons
Helicanus / 3rd Fisherman / Pander

Brian is making his third appearance with Wooden O, where he previously could be seen as Touchstone in *As You Like It* (2015) and Caliban in *The Tempest* (2013). You may have seen him locally at ACT Theatre in *Lieutenant of Inishmore,* Seattle Opera in *Porgy and Bess*, Theater Schmeater, and Seattle Public Theater in *On Clover Road.* He studied Creative Drama at Illinois State University and then moved to Chicago where he worked with Metropolis Theater, First Folio, and many others with the highlight being playing Jerry Springer in the North American premier of *Jerry Springer: The Opera* which won the Joseph Jefferson award for outstanding musical.

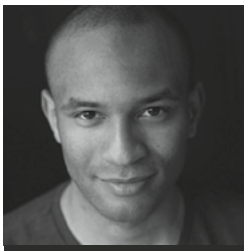
Nikki Visel
Escanes / Dionyza

Nikki was last on the Wooden O stage in 2015's *Henry IV part 1* and 2014's *Julius Caesar.* Other work with Seattle Shakespeare Company includes educational tours of *Romeo and Juliet, Hamlet,* and *Julius Caesar*. Nikki has performed locally with Taproot Theatre Company, Seattle Public Theater, ReAct Theatre, and Theatre 9/12 among others. Favorite roles include Lisa (*The God Game*), Mrs. Chevely (*An Ideal Husband*), Athena (*The Odyssey*), Rose (*Enchanted April*), Claire (*Proof*), Joy (*Shadowlands*) and Catherine (*The Foreigner*). Nikki is currently directing the one-woman show *Learning Curve* by Jodie Knowles which is being produced in Seattle in October before touring regionally.

Maile Wong
Daughter of Antiochus / Philemon / 1st Lady in Waiting

Maile is a Seattle native, actress, and teaching artist. She is a graduate of Lakeside School and Wellesley College, where she studied Developmental Psychology and Theatre Studies, as well as a member of the 2016 Intiman Emerging Artist Program. Most recently, she played Risa in Sound Theatre Company's *Nadeshiko* and performed with Pork Filled Productions at the National Conference for the Consortium of Asian American Theatre Artists (CAATA) in Ashland, Oregon. Favorite past roles include Poppy in *Noises Off*, Matt in *Matt and Ben*, and Alais in *The Lion in Winter*.

Jackie Pomeroy


Lorenzo Roberts

David Rock

Cahillane Shine

Brian Simmons

Nikki Visel

CAST: MUCH ADO

LoraBeth Barr
Ursula / Watch

LoraBeth is pleased to perform with Wooden O this summer. In Seattle LoraBeth has enjoyed making and performing new work. She played the role of Katie in the West Coast premier of *Dirty* with Washington Ensemble Theatre, Andrea in the world premier of *Returning to Albert Joseph,* and Edith in *reWilding* as a member of The Satori Group. LoraBeth is excited to move to Los Angeles this summer with her fiance Alex Matthews.

Israel Bloodgood
Balthasar / Watch

Israel is an Eastern Oregon University graduate who has been involved in theatre since childhood. Since graduating he has been working with the LaGrande Shakespeare Company and has played many roles including Edgar in *King Lear*, Proteus in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, Renfield in *Dracula*, and Hamlet. He has also been involved in Bend Shakespeare in the Park for the past two summers, having last played Ferdinand in *The Tempest*. He plans to move to a major city and gain theatrical experience while auditioning for graduate schools.

Maddie Brantz
Watch / Maid

Maddie is a graduate of Cornish College of the Arts and recently appeared in Seattle Shakespeare Company's *A Midsummer Night's Dream.* Maddie is originally from Wyoming where she received her Associates of Arts degree in musical theater with a minor in dance from Casper College. Later this summer, Maddie will be working as an educational assistant at Stone Soup Theatre.

Spencer Funk
Claudio

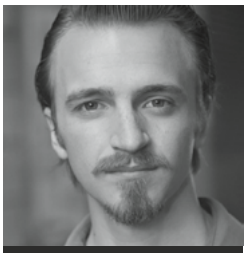
Spencer trained at Cornish College of the Arts where he received his BFA in Theater this year with an emphasis in Original Work. He is an actor, director, playwright, and founding member of The Core Ensemble. At Cornish College of the Arts, Spencer recently played Ferdinand in *The Tempest*, had a reading of his original play *Traffick* at the Winter New Works Festival, and acted as dramaturg on a production of *Julius Caesar.* With The Core Ensemble, Spencer recently directed an original adaption of *The Pirates of Penzance*, and helped devise and perform a sketch based show, *Who Arted?* Shakespeare is a constant inspiration in Spencer's work, and he could

Maile Wong

Lorabeth Barr

Israel Bloodgood

Maddie Brantz


Spencer Funk

Keiko Green

not be more thrilled to be working with Seattle Shakespeare Company on this, his professional debut!

Keiko Green
Beatrice

Keiko is a performer and playwright, originally hailing from Marietta, Georgia. She received her BFA in Theatre from New York University's Tisch School of the Arts. Recently, she performed at ACT Theatre (*Stupid F#@*ing Bird, Bad Apples, Dangerous Liaisons*) — where she was a member of the 2016 Core Acting Company; Seattle Repertory Theatre (*The Comparables*); Seattle Shakespeare Company (*Othello, Love's Labour's Lost, Bring Down the House parts 1 & 2, A Midsummer Night's Dream*); Seattle Public Theater (*Amadeus, Caught*); and Theatre22's *Water by the Spoonful,* among others. As a playwright, Keiko is a resident artist at Seattle Repertory Theatre, where she showcased her full-length play *Nadeshiko,* which was recently produced by Sound Theatre Company. Thanks to the support of her parents and her fiancé, and very own Benedick, MJ.

Frank Lawler
Leonato

Frank was most recently onstage as Superintendent Kirk in *Busman's Honeymoon* at Taproot Theatre. Acting credits include *The Pitmen Painters* (ACT Theatre), *The School for Lies* (Sound Theatre), *Frankenstein; or, The Modern Prometheus* (Book-It Repertory Theatre), *Arms and the Man* (Seattle Public Theater), *As You Like It* (Harlequin Productions), *Peter and the Starcatcher* (Coeur d'Alene Summer Theatre) and *Zapoi!* (Annex Theatre). His latest play, *Holiday of Errors*, co-written with Daniel Flint, was recently published by StageRights. Frank is board president of Strawberry Theatre Workshop and past board chair of Theatre Puget Sound. Frank is a graduate of Harvard University and trained with Shakespeare and Company. He is married to writer/educator Ann McCurdy; they are the proud parents of Rowan.

Meranda Long
Hero

Meranda is delighted to be spending her summer outdoors with the Wooden O crew as Hero in Shakespeare's *Much Ado About Nothing*. She is a graduate from the Cornish College of the Arts Original Works program. Her most recent work includes writing and generating a new play from a poetry book, *The Book of Qualities* by J. Ruth Gendler, in which she played *Stillness, Excitement,* and *Courage.* Other works include a self composed solo show, *The Virginity Chronicles*, and she appeared as Castor and Styrus in Mary J. Zimmerman's *Argonautika* last fall. When not performing or writing, you may find Meranda climbing a waterfall . . . or nibbling on a piece of mango.

Alex Matthews
Don Pedro

Alex is a proud member of The Seagull Project where he recently performed at ACT in their production of *The Cherry Orchard.* He is a founding member of The Satori Group ensemble here in Seattle and has worked at numerous theaters and performance spaces in town. He was just seen in *Luna Gale* and *Sherlock Holmes and the American Problem* at the Seattle Repertory Theater. This is his fourth show with Seattle Shakespeare Company where he was last seen as Damis in *Tartuffe*. Alex is so proud and excited to be working with his fiancee on their first Wooden O show!

Corey McDaniel
Antonio

Corey is the producing artistic director of Theatre22 and is a freelance actor, producer, and teacher, although he works primarily as a director in the region. *Much Ado About Nothing* marks Corey's first production with Wooden O. His most recent director credits include *Treasure Island* with Book-It Repertory Theatre; *Sister Act the Musical, God Kids,* and *Bonnie and Clyde* at Cornish College of the Arts; *Julius Caesar* with Island Shakespeare Festival; *The Nerd* at Mt Baker Theatre; and *The Pride, Wizzer Pizzer: Getting Over the Rainbow* and *The Hours of Life* with Theatre22. Corey was last seen on-stage in Seattle Public Theater's *Grand Concourse, Live! From the Last Night of My Life* for Theatre22 and *Attack of the Killer Murder . . . of Death!* at Theater Schmeater. In the fall, Corey will be directing *Burn This* by Lanford Wilson with Theatre22.

Rafael Molina
Conrade

Rafael is an actor, director, and composer. Rafael recently finished his second year performing in Seattle Shakespeare Company's statewide tour. Other recent acting credits include *Lydia* (Strawberry Theatre Workshop), *The Liar* (Seattle Public Theater), *Twilight Zone: Live* (Theater Schmeater). He recently directed a remount of *Raisins in a Glass of Milk* by Lexi Chipman (18th & Union). Recent composition credits include *The Winters Tale* (Seattle Shakespeare Company), and *Limbo* (Young People's Teen Musical Theatre Company). Rafael received his BFA from Cornish College of the Arts. Up next he will be performing in *Into the Woods* with Village Theatre.

George Mount
Dogberry

For Seattle Shakespeare Company, George has recently appeared in *A Midsummer Night's Dream, The Winter's Tale, Romeo and Juliet,* and *Titus Andronicus.* Recent direction credits include *A Midsummer Night's Dream, Hamlet* (Wooden O), and *Henry IV Part I* (Wooden O). George is the founding Artistic Director of Wooden O, where he has played Malvolio, Iago, Richard III, Shylock, Hamlet, Cassius, Benedick, Caliban, Romeo, and Feste and directed many productions. Other credits include work at ACT Theatre, Book-It Repertory Theatre, Seattle Public Theater, SecondStory Repertory Theatre, and Village Theatre.

Conner Neddersen
Don John / Verges

Conner is a local actor and resident teacher in the Seattle area. This is his fourth year venturing into the parks with Seattle Shakespeare Company's Wooden O summer season! Conner graduated from Cornish College of the Arts with a BFA, and is a New Century Theatre Company member. Past appearances in parks include *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* (Valentine), *Henry IV part 1* (Prince Hal), and *Hamlet*. Some Seattle theatre favorites include; *Into the West* (Fin) with Seattle Children's Theatre; *9 Circles* (Pvt. Daniel E. Reeves) with

Strawberry Theatre Workshop; *My Name Is Asher Lev* (Asher), *Festen* (Poul), and *Mary's Wedding* (Charlie) with New Century Theatre Company; and *The Explorers Club* (Luscious Fretway) with Taproot Theatre. TV/Film: *Danger Diva*, Microsoft, NBC.

Cass Neumann
Sexton / Jazz Singer / Maid

Cass is delighted to be a part of her first production with Wooden O. She is a recent graduate from Cornish College of the Arts with a BFA in Acting and an emphasis in Musical Theatre. Her most recent appearances include Sister Albert Maria in the touring production of *Tony n' Tina's Wedding*, Belinda in *Cardinal Sins* (Centerstage Theatre), Liliane La Fleur in *Nine the Musical* (Cornish College of the Arts), and Grandma Tzeitel in *Fiddler on the Roof* (ManeStage Theatre Company). Outside her theatrical career, she is a bridal stylist in Greenwood. Cass is excited to be spending her summer outdoors exploring her home state while working with an incredible company of artists.

MJ Sieber
Benedick

MJ was previously seen at Seattle Shakespeare Company as Bottom in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and Autolycus in *The Winter's Tale*, directed by Shelia Daniels. Previous stage credits include roles at Seattle Repertory Theatre (*Dry Powder, Outside Mullingar, Photograph 51, Glengarry Glen Ross, Twelfth Night*), ACT Theatre (*Stupid F#@*ing Bird, The Lieutenant of Inishmore, A Christmas Carol*), Intiman Theatre (*Native Son*), and Strawberry Theatre Workshop (*The Elephant Man, Gutenberg the Musical, Accidental Death of an Anarchist*). He is a Founding Member and Associate Artistic Director with New Century Theatre Company and appeared on stage in *The Adding Machine, O Lovely Glowworm, The Trial,* and *Festen*, and directed the West Coast premiere of the Pulitzer Prize-winning *The Flick*. He is honored to play this role along side local treasure Keiko Green with special thanks to the future Sie-Green family.

Hannah Rachel Tamkin
Margaret / Watch

Hannah is thrilled to be a part of the cast of *Much Ado About Nothing*. This is her first production with Seattle Shakespeare Company. She is a recent graduate from Cornish College of the Arts with a BFA in Musical Theatre. Past works include *Nine the Musical, Singing in the Rain*, and *Rent*.

Mark Joseph Trammell
Priest / Messenger

Mark is a Texas transplant who recently graduated from Cornish College of the Arts with a degree in Original Works/ Theatre. He was most recently seen at Cornish in *Wight* a solo piece. He is looking forward to making his Wooden O debut!

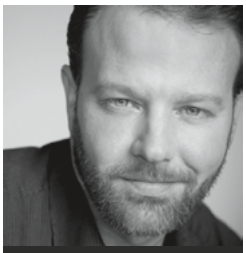
Steve Vanderzee
Borachio

Steve is thrilled to be making his theater debut in his home city of Seattle. After graduating in 2010 from Calvin College (Grand Rapids, MI), he moved to Portland where he attended Portland Actors Conservatory (class of 2012). He went on to act with several Portland theater companies until his move back to Seattle in August. Some favorite roles include Jeff in *Suburbia* (Portland Actors Conservatory); Romeo in *Romeo and Juliet* (Bend Shakespeare Festival); Amintor in *The Maid's Tragedy* (Northwest Classical Theatre Company); Keith in *Betty's Summer Vacation* (Defunkt Theatre); Demetrius in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Post5 Theater); Lucky in *Waiting for Godot* (Northwest Classical Theater Collaborative); George in *Suddenly, Last Summer* (Shaking the Tree); and Dracula in Steven Dietz's *Dracula* (La Grande Shakespeare Company).

Frank Lawler

Meranda Long

Alex Matthews


Corey McDaniel

Rafael Molina

George Mount

PRODUCTION TEAMS

Louise Butler
Stage Manager (*Pericles*)

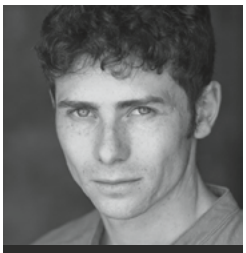
Louise is glad to spend another summer in the park with Wooden O, having previously stepped into the sun for *The Two Gentlemen of Verona, Henry V*, and *Macbeth*. Louise has been a part of stage management teams for Seattle Shakespeare Company (A *Midsummer Night's Dream, Romeo and Juliet, King Lear*), Village Theatre (*Around The World In 80 Days, Mary Poppins, In The Heights*), Book-It Repertory Theatre (*A Moveable Feast, Slaughterhouse-Five, The Art of Racing in the Rain*), Balagan Theatre (*Carrie, Hedwig and the Angry Inch, Othello*), Showtunes Theatre Company (*Miracle on 34th Street*), Theater Schmeater (*Twilight Zones*), the Northwest Folklife Festival, Giant Magnet, and 14/48. In addition to her stage management work, Louise is the Production Manager for Seattle Shakespeare Company.

Adrian Delahunt
Technical Director (*Pericles* & *Much Ado About Nothing*)

Adrian is excited to work on another season of Wooden O! Adrian's work as a technical director and carpenter can be found on many stages around the Sound, including the mainstage seasons of Seattle Shakespeare Company and Book-It Repertory Theatre. As a member of the Seattle Scenic Studios team, Adrian worked to bring professional quality scenery to a myriad of schools and small companies in Seattle. Recent favorite projects include Seattle Shakespeare Company's *The Winter's Tale* and Centerstage Theatre's *Cardinal Sins*.

Caitlin Denney-Turner
Assistant Stage Manager (*Pericles*)

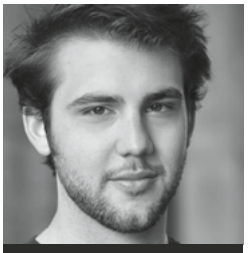
Caitlin is happy to be back with Wooden O for her second season. She has previously worked with Seattle Shakespeare Company on *Love's Labour's Lost* and *Titus Andronicus*. Other regional credits include *Into the West* with Seattle Children's Theatre, *Dreamgirls, Billy Elliot,*

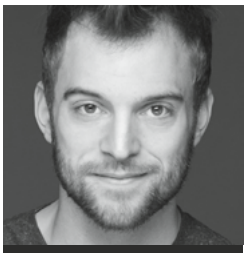

Conner Neddersen

Cass Neumann

MJ Sieber

Hannah Rachel Tamkin


Mark Joseph Trammell


Steve Vanderzee

and *The 39 Steps* with Village Theatre; and *All the Way* and *The Great Society* with Seattle Repertory Theatre.

Jocelyne Fowler
Costume Designer (*Much Ado About Nothing*)

Jocelyne is the recipient of the 2016 Gregory Award in Outstanding Costume Design. She has designed for Seattle Shakespeare Company (*Mrs. Warren's Profession, Titus Andronicus,* and *Richard II*), Wooden O (*Henry IV part I, Two Gentlemen of Verona, The Tempest,* and *Henry V*), Book-It Repertory Theatre (*Treasure Island, Emma, Pride and Prejudice*, *Frankenstein; or, The Modern Prometheus, Anna Karenina*, etc), Tacoma Musical Playhouse, Seattle Musical Theatre, Vashon Opera, Youth Theatre Northwest, and others. Upcoming work can be seen in *The Little Mermaid* at Tacoma Musical Playhouse and *Go Dog Go!* with Youth Theatre Northwest.

Jon Kretzu
Director (*Much Ado About Nothing*)

Jon is thrilled for his first Wooden O production. He previously directed *Love's Labour's Lost* (Gregory nomination Best Director) and *Twelfth Night* with Seattle Shakespeare Company. Jon has worked in theatre for 35 years and was the Associate Artistic Director at Artists Repertory Theatre in Portland for 20 years, where he directed over 50 productions including *Assassins, Death of a Salesman, The History Boys, A Streetcar Named Desire, Next To Normal, The Lieutenant of Irishmore, The Seagull, The Cherry Orchard, The Normal Heart, Othello, Design For Living, Buried Child, Love! Valour! Compassion!,* and the World Premiere of Tracy Letts' adaptation of *Three Sisters*. He has directed in Seattle, Portland, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Santa Barbara, and Milwaukee. Jon made his Canadian debut this February, directing *As You Like It* for the Stratford Festival in Ontario. Jon is a proud member of SDC.

Annie Lareau
Director (*Pericles*)

Annie is a professional director, actor, adaptor, teaching artist and Co-Artistic Director at Seattle Public Theater as well as a member of the Sandbox Artists Collective. She has received two Seattle Times Footlight awards for acting and was nominated twice for California's Elly awards in Direction. Annie earned her BFA in Acting and Directing from Syracuse University and her M.Ed in Arts Education from Harvard University. Some past projects include: adapting and directing *Hotel on the Corner of Bitter and Sweet* (Book-It Repertory Theatre and Asian Theater of the Sierras), directing *Chinglish* (ArtsWest and Asian Theater of the Sierras), *Little Dog Laughed* (ArtsWest), *As You Like It* (Seattle Shakespeare Company/ Wooden O), *Doktor Kaboom: Live Wire* (Kennedy Center for the Arts, Washington D.C) and *Forever Plaid* (Mt. Baker Theater,Bellingham).

Robin Macartney
Properties Designer (*Pericles* & *Much Ado About Nothing*)

Robin always loves working with Seattle Shakespeare Company. Professional credits include technical work with Café Nordo, Youth Theatre Northwest, New Century Theatre Co., Book-It Repertory Theatre, Theatre22, Annex Theatre, Bainbridge Center for the Performing Arts, Live Girls! Theater, Pork Filled Productions, and eSe Teatro. She is the scene shop supervisor at the University of Puget Sound as well as front of house manager/resident set designer at the Theatre Off-Jackson.

Kelly McDonald
Costume Director (*Pericles*)

This is Kelly's fourth year in a row working with Wooden O! Previously designing *Love's Labour's Lost, As You Like It,* and *Julius Caesar*. Mainstage designs include *The Winter's Tale* and *Romeo and Juliet*. Work around town has been seen at Intiman Theatre, Seattle Public Theater, Village Theatre, ArtsWest, Freehold, Café Nordo, Cherry Manhatton Presents, Cornish College of the Arts, and The Evergreen School.

Evan Mosher
Sound Designer (*Much Ado About Nothing*)

Evan is a Seattle sound designer, musician, and actor. He's happy to be back in the parks after designing *Hamlet* last year, and couldn't be happier to be co-designing with his erstwhile bandmate, Robertson Witmer. Evan also previously collaborated with Jon Kretzu on *Caught* at Seattle Public Theater. Since 2010 Evan has designed over 40 shows with Seattle Public Theater, Strawberry Theatre Workshop, Seattle Shakespeare Company, Wooden O, Washington Ensemble Theatre, ArtsWest, The Satori Group, Azeotrope, Splinter Group, SOAPfest, New Century Theatre Company, Book-It Repertory Theatre, and On the Boards. He is also a founding member of art-pop band "Awesome" with whom he's made melodic noise and peculiar performance since 2004. Evan is also a company member, performer, and A/V Manager at Café Nordo's Culinarium in Pioneer Square.

Crystal Dawn Munkers
Choreographer (*Pericles* & *Much Ado About Nothing*)

Crystal, long-time lover of Seattle Shakespeare Company, recently choreographed the mainstage productions of *A Midsummer Night's Dream, Romeo and Juliet* (Assistant Director), *Much Ado About Nothing, Love's Labour's Lost,* and Gregory Award "Best Production" Nominee *As You Like It*. Past Wooden O credits include *As You Like It, Julius Caesar, The Two Gentlemen of Verona, The Tempest, The Comedy of Errors, Much Ado About Nothing*, and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Assistant Director). Most recently, her choreography was featured in *Stellaluna* (Seattle Children's Theatre), *Bad Apples* (ACT Theatre), and *Sister Act* (Cornish College of the Arts). Crystal received her graduate certification in Directing for the Stage and Screen from the University of Washington.

Emma Pihl
Stage Manager (*Much Ado About Nothing*)

Emma is happy to be returning to Wooden O and Seattle Shakespeare Company after roaming the parks with *As You Like It* two summers ago and working on their recent indoor productions of T*he Winter's Tale* and *Titus Andronicus.* Emma has also recently worked with Seattle Repertory Theatre (*Here Lies Love*), Book-It Repertory Theatre (*A Moveable Feast, Treasure Island, Pride and Prejudice, The Amazing Adventures of Kavalier and Clay*, and others), ACT Theatre and The 5th Avenue Theatre (*Assassins*),

Seattle Children's Theatre (*Elephant and Piggie's "We Are in a Play!"*), Village Theatre (*Cabaret*), and New Century Theatre Company (*The Flick*). Emma is a member of New Century Theatre Company.

Matt Reed
Composer (*Pericles*)

Matt is a local music and theatre artist. Past projects include music direction and composition for *A Midsummer Night's Dream, Wild Kate,* and *The Bacchae* at Cornish College of the Arts, as well as the Theatre Battery 24-hour play festival, *Sleep Is for the Weak*. He played the role of Archon in The Intiman's production of *Lysistrata*. Matt is lead vocalist and songwriter for the local soul/pop-rock band Tonight at Noon. He is also a founder, producer, director and performer for Broken Cage Collective. Later this summer Matt will be music directing and performing as a multi-instrumentalist in Theatre Battery's production of *Everything is P.R.*

Meghan Roche
Sound Designer (*Pericles*)

Meghan is a Seattle-based freelance sound designer and theatre technician. Raised in Southern California, she moved to the PNW to study theatre at Seattle University, from which she graduated with honors in 2016 after over a half-dozen mainstage designs and assistant designs. Recent designs include *Three Americans: Voices of Hope* at West of Lenin, *Sex with Strangers* at ReACT Theatre, and *12 Ophelias* at Seattle University (Alumni design). Assistant-designs include *Bright Half Life* at New Century Theatre Company (with Evan Mosher) and *Bring Down the House Parts 1 & 2* at Seattle Shakespeare company.

Shane Unger
Assistant Stage Manager (*Much Ado About Nothing*)

Shane is thrilled to be spending the summer with Seattle Shakespeare Company after previously working on *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Mrs. Warren's Profession*. He has worked with various companies around Seattle including The 5th Avenue Theatre, Book-It Repertory Theatre, Intiman Theatre Festival, Seattle Public Theater, and Taproot Theatre. Shane has a BFA in Stage Management from Syracuse University.

Kayla Walker
Assistant Director (*Pericles*)

Kayla is thrilled to be back with Wooden O. You may have seen her outside in *Hamlet* or *Julius Caesar*, and she is grateful for the opportunity to work with Annie and the cast on the incredible journey of *Pericles*. As an actress and dialect coach, she has worked with Village Theatre (*A Proper Place, Cabaret, Mary Poppins*), ACT Theatre (*A Christmas Carol*), Book-It Repertory Theatre (*Emma, I Am of Ireland*), Annex Theatre (*Girl, Bunnies, Zapoi!*), and many more. You can see her back on stage this fall in Annex Theatre's production of *Last Stop on Lilac*, directed by Keira McDonald.

Robertson Witmer
Sound Designer (*Much Ado About Nothing*)

Rob's previous designs for Seattle Shakespeare Company include *Bring Down the House parts 1 and 2, Romeo and Juliet,* and *Mrs. Warren's Profession*. Other recent credits include *Daisy, Stupid F#@*ing Bird*, and *The Cherry Orchard* (ACT Theatre); *Lydia* (Strawberry Theatre Workshop); *Dancing at Lughnasa* (Tantrum Theater Company); and *Tale for the Time Being* (Book-It Repertory Theatre). Rob's designs have also been heard at Washington Ensemble Theatre, New Century Theatre Company, Spectrum Dance Theater, and Teatro ZinZanni. His onstage appearances include *Mr. Burns, A Post-Electric Play* (ACT Theatre); *A Doctor in Spite of Himself* (Intiman Theatre, Berkeley Repertory); and *Fiddler on the Roof* (Village Theatre, Arizona Theatre Company).

Craig B. Wollam
Scenic Designer (*Pericles* & *Much Ado About Nothing*)

This will be Craig's 97th production with Seattle Shakespeare Company. Previous credits include *A Midsummer Night's Dream, Much Ado About Nothing, The Taming of the Shrew, Waiting for Godot*, and *Romeo and Juliet* — among 92 others. Craig's scenic and lighting designs have been seen at Strawberry Theatre Workshop, Langston Hughes, Intiman Theatre, Seattle Opera, Centerstage, Seattle Repertory Theatre, Book-It Repertory Theatre, Village Theatre, Seattle Children's Theatre, Spectrum Dance Theater, CLO, ArtsWest, Bellevue Opera, Wing Luke Museum, The Bruce Lee Exhibit for Inter*Im, Empty Space Theatre, Seattle Public Theater, Youth Theatre Northwest, and Tacoma Actors Guild, locally. Elsewhere, Craig designed for Arizona Theatre Co., Chicago Theatre Center, Atlanta's 14th St Theatre, Boston's Lyric Theatre, Dance Theatre Workshop of NY, Spoleto Festival of Italy, Colony in Miami, Zephyr in LA, Kohler Arts in Sheboygan, and Actor's Playhouse NY. Craig recently closed his non-profit of 18 years, Seattle Scenic Studios, to focus on teaching and design.

LEADERSHIP

John Bradshaw
Managing Director

Now in his fifteenth season with Seattle Shakespeare Company, John is a graduate of the University of Washington and has spent nearly his entire career as part of the Seattle theatre community. At Seattle Shakespeare, he has overseen the growth of the company from a budget of $398,000 to $2 million during his tenure and from serving 16,000 people a year to 54,000; balanced the budget every year during that time; and helped lead a merger with Wooden O, an award-winning, free, outdoor Shakespeare theatre (founded by George Mount). Prior to joining Seattle Shakespeare Company, he was Managing Director at The Empty Space Theatre and Director of Endowment and Planned Giving at Seattle Repertory Theatre. John served as General Manager and Development Director during construction and initial operations at Kirkland Performance Center. At Seattle Children's Theatre, he was part of the development staff during the capital campaign to build the Charlotte Martin Theatre. John is Treasurer of the board of directors for TeenTix. He has served on the boards of Theatre Puget Sound, Book-It Repertory Theatre and the Washington State Arts Alliance/Foundation as well as for the Visiting Committee for the School of Drama at the University of Washington. He is the recipient of the 2012 Melissa Hines Award for Outstanding Theatre Practitioner.

George Mount
Artistic Director

See cast bios.

ACTORS EQUITY ASSOCIATION 1913

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NEXT ONSTAGE

JULIUS CAESAR

By William Shakespeare | Directed by George Mount

Sept 13–Oct 1

Cornish Playhouse at Seattle Center

WHAT IT'S ABOUT

After the adoring public raises the charismatic Caesar to power, political factions question the leader's motives and growing influence. Whispers of mutiny rumble through the corridors of power. Brutus and Cassius reach a dire conclusion that will set their country on the edge of collapse.

WHO YOU'VE SEEN

Lorenzo Roberts: *Pericles (Wooden O), Henry IV part 1 (Wooden O)*

Peter Crook: *Medea*

Reginald André Jackson: *The Winter's Tale, Richard II, A Midsummer Night's Dream*

Bradford Farwell: *Measure for Measure, Cymbeline*

Tickets onsale July 15

seattleshakespeare.org

SEATTLE SHAKESPEARE 2017–2018 SEASON

JULIUS CAESAR

By William Shakespeare • Directed by George Mount

September 13–October 1, 2017

Performed at the Cornish Playhouse

Political Thriller. After the adoring public raises the charismatic Caesar to power, political factions question the leader's motives and growing influence. Whispers of mutiny rumble through the corridors of power. Brutus and Cassius reach a dire conclusion that will set their country on the edge of collapse.

THE GOVERNMENT INSPECTOR

By Nikolai Gogol · Directed by Allison Narver

October 24–November 19, 2017

Performed at the Center Theatre

Bureaucratic Buffoonery. When small town officials mistake an inventive clerk for an undercover inspector sent to root out corruption, the whole village flies into a tailspin. A comic web of bribery, lies, and rampaging self-delusion entangles everyone in chaos.

TIMON OF ATHENS

By William Shakespeare · Directed by John Kazanjian

January 9–February 4, 2018

Performed at the Center Theatre

Money . . . Money Changes Everything. The popular and wealthy Timon has hordes of friends but only when the wine is flowing. When his money runs out, Timon turns to his friends for help. One by one they refuse him, and the carefree philanthropist turns into a reclusive misanthrope. When fortune shines on him again, will Timon find out who his true friends are?

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE

By William Shakespeare · Directed by Desdemona Chiang

March 20–April 15, 2018

Performed at the Center Theatre

Kings of Commerce. The wealthy heiress Portia is forced to set her suitors a challenge for her hand in marriage. In order to woo her, Bassanio finances his plan with money borrowed from his friend Antonio. All would be fine except Antonio has taken out a loan from the moneylender Shylock on the assurance that his ships will make it back to the city. They don't, and Shylock demands repayment with a pound of Antonio's flesh.

SHAKESPEARE IN LOVE

Based on the screenplay by Marc Norman and Tom Stoppard
Adapted for the stage by Lee Hall · Directed by George Mount

May 2–June 3, 2018

Performed at the Cornish Playhouse

Creative Flame. Young Will Shakespeare is in dire need of inspiration. His next play is on deadline and the only thing he's come up with is the title: ***Romeo and Ethel, the Pirate's Daughter***. Then he meets Viola, a smart and beautiful woman who desperately wants to perform on the stage, even though it's forbidden. Will is smitten and gets inspired to write the greatest love story the world has known.

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❑ **Opening Night** (renewing subscribers only)	x	$210	=
❑ **Value-Priced, choose:** ❑ Wed. 7:30pm ❑ Sun. 7:30 pm ❑ Wed. 10:30am	x	$125	=
❑ **Premium, choose:** ❑ Fri. 7:30pm ❑ Sat. 7:30pm			
Adult	x	$195	=
❑ **Senior** ❑ **Student** ❑ **Military**	x	$170	=
❑ **Standard, choose:** ❑ Thurs. 7:30pm ❑ Sat. 2:00pm ❑ Sun. 2:00pm			
Adult	x	$175	=
❑ **Senior** ❑ **Student** ❑ **Military**	x	$155	=

4-Play Choose Your Own	QTY	PRICE	TOTAL
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❑ **Premium, choose:** ❑ Fri. 7:30pm ❑ Sat. 7:30pm			
Adult	x	$160	=
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Betsy Schwartz and the cast of *Bring Down the House*. *Photo by John Ulman.*

country is struggling with," Langs says. *The Crucible*, by that token, is still relevant.

"It probably isn't clear, but I really, really love Ibsen," el-Gasseir says of WET's *Cherdonna's Doll's House.* "I think his writing is cruel and yet compassionate, blunt and subtle, timeless and forward thinking." His production included actors breaking character to act as themselves, dance sequences to Cher songs, and cookies distributed to the audience, but Ibsen's work shines through. The story is the same, but the message shifts. el-Gasseir's self-stated project was to "find a concept that stretches the theme of the text and its language to the limits in order to see how it hits us now in our current world."

Successful adaption projects begin with a thorough understanding of the original play. "To succeed you need to meet the source material," Mount, of Seattle Shakespeare Theatre, says. "If you don't bring you're a-game to a work that is already A-game, you'll fail." el-Gasseir adds. "If you do a modern *Cherry Orchard* in some logging community in the Pacific Northwest, all I will do in your audience is scan for dissonance. I will spend my time trying to see how the concept doesn't fit." Concepts for concept's sake tends not to sit well with audiences, but thoughtful dramaturgically-informed choices can make a production soar.

When concept or additions fall flat, audiences and critics notice. Paul Constant of *Seattle Review of Books*, recently reviewed a production of a Shakespeare play in Seattle. He was so disappointed in the work, he would not even name the play and company he was reviewing. He wrote: "Shakespeare's language is the source code of everything we say or write even today, so if your production mangles the language by piling overacting on top of it, say, or by screwing up the delivery of it with musical interludes, or by—worst of all—adding to it, you are basically committing a crime against the English language. You can't outdo Shakespeare. Don't even try."

But any contemporary production is new. That's the nature of live performance. Theatres can bend classics a little or a lot to tell the stories they want to tell on stage, putting classics will to the test. "[We're] looking to connect [the] text to our contemporary world, revealing something new about the heart of the play that clarifies rather than obscures," explains Langs. "I think we can still do the classics and really engage with them without pandering to perceptions about our audiences who, in my experience, actually love risky, wild ideas," adds el-Gassier. Whether new adaptions of classic deepen themes that are already in the plays or find new angles to explore in the text, it is clear there is much classic plays still have to offer contemporary producers and theatre artists. ■

Dialogue

Jasmine Joshua, artistic director of Reboot Theatre Company. *Photo by Jeff Carpenter.*

A Conversation with Reboot Theatre Company

Reboot Theatre Company tests new interpretations of established works through nontraditional casting, design, and methods yet to be discovered.

We recently sat down with founder and artistic director, Jasmine Joshua, to discuss John Adams, Southern belles in beards, and challenging the norm.

Why did you found Reboot Theatre Company?

I started the company because as an artist, especially as an actor, I frequently found myself bored with a lot of female roles. I was too young to be someone's mom, too old, or not the right body type, to be the romantic lead, and there are only so many sassy friends you can go out for before you're over it.

I've always wanted to play John Adams from the musical *1776*. So back in 2014 when I had just found out I was pregnant with twins, I thought, "What the heck? I'm not going be cast in anything anytime soon. Let's do an all-female reading in my living room!" It snowballed into a fully-realized production that played over one weekend to over 400 people! The feedback I kept hearing over and over again from audiences was, "After the first five minutes, I forgot you were all women!" and that got me thinking. What else could be tested? What other shows could you change the "normal" and either have it make no difference or change the meaning entirely. When does it have more impact? Let's find out!

What does Reboot offer that other theatre companies don't?

We focus entirely on non-traditional casting or design. It's not a once-a-season gimmick. It's not one gender-flip cabaret. Our entire season will always be filled with shows that challenge what is normal and move the needle for what storytelling can achieve if you alter who is telling the story.

What's your favorite classic?

My favorite classic musical is *Gypsy*. Powerful female characters, a Sondheim score, hilarious script, familial drama — it is the perfect musical and no one will convince me otherwise. My favorite classic play is, actually, *Private Lives*, by Noel Coward, which I just had the great honor to direct for Reboot this last season. I am a comedic actor at heart and I love the witty banter and hilarious one-liners. Warms my heart!

What's your favorite re-imagined classic you've seen?

My favorite reimagined classic that I've seen in Seattle was Intiman's *Orpheus Descending* by Tennessee Williams that they co-produced with the Williams Project. I saw the try-out version of it in the summer of 2014 when I was involved in the Emerging Artist Program and it absolutely blew my mind. Five or six actors, playing all the roles, men playing women, women playing men, actors playing whatever race. It was transcendent. The storytelling was so rich and eventually the performers just faded away into the script and I was lost in the world. It was only afterward that I realized, "Wow, that skinny dude with a beard just played a Southern belle and I 100% bought it." It was one of the major catalysts that got me to produce *1776* and found Reboot.

Why should we reimagine the classics?

There will always be someone who will do *Our Town* the way it was originally intended. There will always be amazing classic productions of *The Music Man*. I don't think those should go away. But why not see how much more all the funny, and heartbreaking, and brilliant, and celebrated shows out there can yield if we just change up the status quo a little bit? On a less broad level, I think it is vital that we as a theatre community crack open the treasure trove of classic plays and make them accessible to everyone. Challenging the norm not only attracts diverse artists but also diverse audiences and art is something everyone should have a piece of. Would Willy Loman's plight hit home harder if a woman played him? If a person of color played him? How much more reach could a piece of art have if only a small change was made?

What makes some tests effective and others fail?

Honestly, we're still trying to figure this out and, to me, it is the most exciting part of experimentation. I think an effective reboot can be one of two things: either the audience didn't notice what you've done

to change the story and, thus, started questioning why it's always been done a certain way or you have cracked open a completely new way of interpreting or enjoying a work simply by having a different vessel — performer, designer, what have you — for the art.

I have a pretty narrow definition of a reboot "failing" because I think subtlety, like blind casting where the race or gender of your performers isn't acknowledged in the actual show, like we did in *Fly By Night* or *1776*, is just as worthy of an experiment as big broad strokes, like turning a traditionally cis male character into a trans masculine character, like we did in *Private Lives*. I think the latter sort of reboot is a bigger risk and so can give a bigger reward, but I still say if you just watched a woman casually play a male character on stage and it didn't affect how the story was understood, is that not just as revolutionary?

"Why not see how much more all the funny, and heartbreaking, and brilliant, and celebrated shows out there can yield if we just change up the status quo a little bit?

I guess if I was forced to make a litmus test, I'd say if your reboot breaks the story and makes it impossible for the audience to immerse themselves in the world of the play, then yes, I think it would be a failed test. I think if nontraditional casting actively harms the essence of the show, then it would be a failed test like, for example, an all-white *Raisin in the Sun* or *Fences*.

What Reboot productions are you most proud of?

I am a bit biased since I played the lead, but our all-female *1776* will always have a special place in my heart. As far as I can tell, we produced the only fully realized all-female production ever done. There are plenty of concert versions, but no one has put 26 women in frock coats and done the whole show. I am so incredibly proud of our work and of the conversations that it started. How our Founding Fathers essentially threw American slaves under the bus in order to secure independence is a gut-wrenching and important part of our history that this brilliant musical plays out on stage. I think that having a diverse group of women portraying this decision was extremely impactful on our audiences, especially since Freddie Gray's murder and the Baltimore riots were still so fresh in everyone's minds and hearts at the time.

What's coming up for Reboot?

We are working on another season right now. We did solicited submissions from the community for our next season and got over 20 submissions, which was so exciting. We read through them all and have some favorites, musicals and straight plays alike, but are waiting on some permissions before we can announce. We think it's important to gain permission from licensing houses and playwrights before we change the original intent of a piece because even if the authors decline our reboot, we want them to know that the theatre community is seeking out diversity and wanting to push the boundaries of traditional theatre. But all that takes time.

How can someone help Reboot?

There are a couple of great ways to help Reboot. The most fun way is coming to see our shows and spreading the word. We love new audiences and we are always looking to engage people on what they think about our projects, so we encourage people to check us out, support new companies, and tell us what you think. The easiest thing to do is to join our mailing list, which you can do through our website, and that will keep you up to date on our goings-on and also ticket deals. ■

Dialogue

Exit Interview with Jonathan Shipley

This month, Encore Stages editor Jonathan Shipley ends his tenure with Encore Arts Programs and embarks on new adventures. We wanted to talk to him about company history, the Seattle arts community, and Encore Stages.

How long have you been at Encore?

As of my last day, I have worked for Encore Media Group for eighteen years. I started before we had the internet installed. We were in this old brick building in Belltown, which is where we were during the Nisqually earthquake of 2001. That was really scary, I thought we weren't going to make it.

Wait, really?

Totally! The building started to shake and me and my coworker, Jody, started getting under our desks, like they teach you to do when you're a child. The boss stormed out of his office and just shouted "RUN!" We were in a panic, so we all ran into the alley, which is quite possibly, the most dangerous place to be during an earthquake.

But everyone was okay?

Yes, we all made it. No Encore casualties. Definitely some tears, though. And then, we went right back to work. We have deadlines, people!

Have you ever missed a deadline?

For a publication, never. Not that I know of. I think, maybe a decade or so ago, there was a big snowstorm in Oregon, where our printer is, and the truck got stuck in some mountain pass and couldn't quite get the theatre programs to the theatre in time. Treacherous goings, sometimes, magazine publishing.

Do you see the programs in action? Do you see a lot of performances?

I've gone to a lot of performances. Quite a few, actually, much to the delight of my kid, who is a bit of a theater nerd.

What have been some of your favorites?

One of my favorites is *Kinky Boots.* Me and my daughter love that show. It's just got wonderful music and a wonderful message. Seattle Rep did *Of Mice and Men* several years ago. Being a Steinbeck nut, I couldn't help but appreciate that one. Anytime the Seattle Symphony performs Charles Ives, I swoon. You don't know Charles Ives? The best composer who has ever lived who also sold insurance. You should check him out.

What's it like day-to-day in the Encore offices? How has is changed since you started?

It's busy here. We have approximately 1,385 deadlines from all the various publications we work on each year. I think the stress that comes with that, though, also produces some really creative, close collaborations—and friendships. We all put a lot of effort into a product that we believe in, because we all want to support the arts. The technology and the personnel have changed, but that passion for the arts and the desire to support them has always been central.

The arts are important to you personally, then?

Oh, yes. I've been involved with them in some form or another since I was a little kid. It's one of the few things that elevates humans beyond mere humanity. I can think of three things that can do that for us: The natural world can do that for us, a religion can do that for us, and art can do that for us. With the arts, we can take us beyond ourselves and, at the same time, bring ourselves to us. I really believe that.

What else should people know about you before you head out?

I'm interested in my city. I like writing about culture, and art, and food, and history, and about all the various communities within this city called Seattle.

Tell me about the work you've done as an editor and writer for Stages.

It's been rewarding. This is publication of which I am proud. Internally, I've gotten to work closely with the team to redesign stages and figure out what we write about in each issue. Outside of the office, I've been able to meet and talk to people passionate about what they do. That's perpetually inspiring. For example, I wasn't particularly interested in the circus, but then I talked to folks at the School of Acrobatics and New Circus Arts, and then I was interested just because they are. To be able to capture that joy in words is a great exercise for me. Learning about drag queens or cello restoration or Latinx art, it's been an honest-to-god joy. ■

Intermission Brain Transmission

Are you waiting the curtain to rise? Or, perhaps, you've just returned your seat before the second act and have a few minutes to spare? Treat your brain to this scintillating trivia quiz!

Email us the answer to the last question and have a chance to win tickets to a show!

1) Seattle Shakespeare Company's Wooden O Theatre is presenting *Much Ado About Nothing* outdoors this summer. Who played the role of Beatrice in the award-winning 1993 Kenneth Branagh film?

   a) Kate Beckinsale
   b) Emma Thompson
   c) Helena Bonham Carter
   d) Kristin Scott Thomas

2) Taproot Theatre is putting on a musical adaptation of Jane Austen's *Persuasion*. What was Austen's last completed novel?

   a) *Persuasion*
   b) *Mansfield Park*
   c) *Sense and Sensibility*
   d) *Emma*

3) *Alex and Aris* is a world-premiere play being showcased at ACT Theatre about the education of a king. Alexander the Great was the king of what empire?

   a) Roman
   b) Greek
   c) British
   d) Egyptian

Jane Austen engraving, care of the Library of Congress

4) *Pericles* is one of Shakespeare's least-known works. It's being put on by Wooden O Theatre this summer. What type of play is it?

   a) Tragedy
   b) Comedy
   c) History
   d) Romance

5) What Broadway musical production has won the most Tony Awards?

   a) *Hamilton*
   b) *The Producers*
   c) *South Pacific*
   d) *The Phantom of the Opera*

Bonus Question

What was the last arts performance you attended that you liked best and why?

Email your response to production@encoremediagroup.com with Trivia Quiz in the subject line.

ANSWERS 1) B – Emma Thompson. Branagh played Benedick opposite her Beatrice. The film also starred such actors as Denzel Washington, Keanu Reeves and Michael Keaton. 2) A – *Persuasion*. It was published at the end of 1817, six months after her death. 3) B – Greek. Undefeated in battle, by the age of 30 Alexander the Great created one of the largest empires of the ancient world, stretching from Greece to northwestern India. 4) D – Romance. Scholars say it is not likely Shakespeare wrote the piece on his own. It was a collaboration, perhaps with English dramatist George Wilkins. 5) B – *The Producers*. Though Hamilton received more nominations (16), *The Producers* won more awards (12).

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