



Interlochen

ARTS ACADEMY

Interlochen, Michigan
199th Program of the 62nd Year

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MUSE:

a collaborative work facilitated and directed by Lisa Sanderson

script collaboratively written by MUSE cast
featuring an original song by Hanna Andreassen
with additional material by William Shakespeare and various artists

Thursday, March 14, 2024

7:30pm, Phoenix Theatre

Shakespeare plays quoted include:

*The Merchant of Venice, Macbeth, King Lear, Romeo & Juliet, Antony & Cleopatra,
A Midsummer Night's Dream, Much Ado About Nothing, Hamlet*

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| Portia | Hanna Andreassen, Norman, Okla. |
| Juliet | Sabrina Bianco, Bronxville, N.Y. |
| Shakespeare | Rion Emery, London, England |
| Puck..... | Julian McCoy, Charlotte, N.C. |
| Lady Macbeth | Annabelle Benham, College Station, Texas |
| Macbeth..... | Tiernan Tajalli, Glencoe, Ill. |
| Beatrice | London McKenzie, Green Bay, Wis. |
| Lady Anne Hathaway/Assassin | Sophia Stine, Alexandria, Va. |
| Cleopatra | Maddie Silva, Petaluma, Calif. |
| King Lear | Zoe Niemkiewicz, Troy, Mich. |

Songs

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| "Right Hand Man" from <i>Something Rotten!</i> | Karey & Wayne Kirkpatrick, John O'Farrell |
| | Annabelle Benham, vocals |
| "Mercy" | Hanna Andreassen, produced by James Conner |
| | Hanna Andreassen, vocals |
| "Waiting (O Mistress Mine)" | Nitin Sawhney |
| | Sabrina Bianco, vocals |
| "Falling in Love with Love" from <i>The Boys from Syracuse</i> . | Richard Rodgers & Lorenz Hart |
| | London McKenzie, vocals |
| "Sonnet 20" | Rufus Wainwright |
| | Sophia Stine, vocals |

DIRECTOR'S NOTES

Creating MUSE with this cast has been inspiring. Our original collective goal was to present a simple program of songs and sonnets by or inspired by Shakespeare. But at the first cast meeting, I asked the students if they were willing to challenge themselves by co-creating an original show; a context that would make our then-"recital" more entertaining and enhance the learning and performance opportunities for them. After a week of work, we formulated the premise: Shakespeare is offered an opportunity to publish, but he must choose just one play. Some of his characters appear to him in a dream dinner party to plead their case for publication. Songs, monologues, and insult battles ensue!

Based on past work in Chicago as a teaching artist, I knew that collaborative creation could lead to greater student investment; and support student artistry from various angles. We discussed questions such as: What exactly is "good material" for an actor? How do we create and "land" that? Why is Shakespeare universally regarded as good material? What do I have to understand to translate this sentence of contemporary language into Shakespearean text, and vice versa? What moves a story forward for an audience? How does one calibrate a tragic-comic performance? Why do musicals require choreographers? And just how hard WAS it to get published in Shakespeare's era?

These ideas went far beyond actors' craft. This required critical thinking as well as collaborative patience and dramaturgy. We also wanted to find places to insert Shakespeare text to replace contemporary dialogue, something suggested and facilitated by our Shakespeare acting coach for the project, Laura Mittelstaedt. I wondered whether I was over-challenging our students, many of whom are at earlier levels of training.

The cast was energized by the level of creative challenge and agency MUSE offered! They made connections to areas of related training, such as period dance and original songwriting, and contributed innumerable ideas for their characters' actions, for the story arc, for the dialogue, for their scenes, for everything! Laura supported us with in-depth coaching of Shakespeare text and her responses to the ongoing work as it coalesced into the witty and worldly-wise piece you are about to see. Through this process, I think we have, in addition to growing as artists, internalized the meaning of inspiration. MUSE is, in a way, a microcosm of Interlochen itself.

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PRODUCTION CREDITS

Stage Manager/Lighting & Sound Coordinator Riley Dungan, Traverse City, Mich.
Acting Coach Laura Mittelstaedt
Director of Theatre Arts William Church
Director of Musical Theatre Justin Lee Miller
Director of Theatre Design and Production Stephen John

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You can ensure the next promising young artist has the opportunity to come to Interlochen by supporting student scholarships. Make your gift to the Interlochen Annual Fund by visiting www.interlochen.org/giveonline.

Many of our venues are equipped with induction loop systems for the hearing impaired. Please ask one of our ushers if you need assistance connecting to the system. Support for recent upgrades to these systems provided by Michigan Arts and Culture Council; the NEA; Rotary Charities of Traverse City; the Les and Anne Biederman Foundation, Inc.; the Oleson Foundation; and Robert W. Anderson.

In consideration of the performing artists and other patrons, the use of flash photography is not permitted. Federal copyright and licensing rules prohibit the use of video cameras and other recording equipment.

In order to provide a safe and healthy environment, Interlochen maintains a smoke-free and alcohol-free campus. Michigan law prohibits any weapons, including concealed weapons, on Interlochen property because we are an educational campus. Thank you for your cooperation.

www.interlochen.org