

PLAY: Play is set in Drake Park in Bend this weekend

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Jesus' betrayer, Judas Iscariot, who loves Jesus, but does not believe Jesus is truly God and fears what the repercussions of Jesus' influence will have culturally and politically.

Johnson finds the role to be quite challenging in this complex, and sometimes controversial, production. If playing the part of the Son of God is not hard enough in itself, part of the test for Johnson, who played this same role in 2005, stems from the fact that Judas's actions and opinions stir up a lot of anger.

"It has been challenging to find the character of Jesus through the eyes of Judas. For example, a majority of Jesus' dialog and music are quite angry — for Judas wants to show the world that history was written wrong. As an actor playing Jesus, I must find a way to reflect the anger of Judas' viewpoint, but also be kind enough to have a following of tons of people and start a huge movement."

He is thankful for a second shot at the role.

"Years ago, I played the role as a much more angry character," he said. "I am thankful to have the opportunity to play the role again, for it has definitely changed in my mind. I am now playing the role as a kind and magnetizing character who is sometimes misunderstood by Judas and his other followers. Every decision that my character makes is from a caring heart and an understanding of what he has foreseen the end to be. In the show, Jesus knows the demise that is coming in his last days, he is trying to teach his followers all that he can before he leaves the earth."

He continued, "Jesus is a very difficult role mentally and physically. Mentally, Jesus must deal with his upcoming death while teaching his followers who don't quite understand. Physically, Jesus's last days are very violent. My character gets really beat up in the second act — 39 lashes, not to mention the crucifixion."

Johnson is no stranger to the stage.

"I was last seen on stage in Central Oregon playing the lead role (Zach) in "A Chorus Line" at the Tower Theatre. I think that was the fall of 2016. Before that, I was seen as The Emcee in "Cabaret," Franz in "The Producers," Seymour in "Little Shop of Horrors," RiffRaff in "The Rocky Horror Show," Phantom in a concert version of "Phantom of the Opera," and Amos in "Chicago" (all at the Tower



PHOTO BY CHARLIE KANZIG

Rick Johnson and Tyler Cranor will take the stage in "Jesus Christ Superstar" in a Theater in the Park production in Bend this week.

Theatre). Before these shows, I worked quite a lot with 2nd Street Theater, Cascades Theatrical Company, and Obsidian Opera Company."

As performance directors, both Johnson and Cranor believe it is important for them to take part in productions outside the walls of the school.

"I think it is very important to continue to perform professionally whenever possible. It keeps my technical abilities and musical ears as sharp as possible. This aids in my ability to bring the best out of my music students, and also sets a strong example of how music can remain a permanent part of your life after school," Cranor said.

Johnson concurs, "As a music teacher, I am able to share my 'real-life' performing experiences with my students. I believe that these experiences show my students more of the reasons why I teach them particular things in class," he said. "I love that I can continue performing as

I teach. It keeps my performing skills fresh and allows the students to see me practicing what I teach daily in class."

Both men hope that people will come out and see the local talent represented in the musical, including Rhonda Schantz of Sisters and 2016 SHS graduate Rob Merola.

"I just really want as many people as possible to get out and enjoy the level of artistry that's possible in Bend," said Cranor. "I feel the fine arts scene has grown significantly, as demonstrated by our ability to perform this show at a high level. There is so much talent around here, and it needs to be continually supported to ensure that events like this keep taking place."

Johnson said, "I encourage everyone to come see this production. It is not your typical musical. It is a rock opera, complete with electric guitar, electric bass, and drum set and represents amazing talent from here in Central Oregon."

Tickets may still be available at bendticket.com.

Forum in Bend to focus on cannabis safety

Cannabis growers and extractors are invited to partake of an opportunity to learn from government and business leaders about safety and health in the cannabis industry as part of a two-day event in Bend next month.

Deschutes County Farm Bureau and the Oregon Farm Bureau (OFB) Health & Safety Committee, in partnership with Oregon's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), present the "Safety and Health in the Cannabis Industry: From Seed to Shatter" forum, taking place September 18-19 at the Riverhouse on the Deschutes.

"This forum is really about helping growers and extractors build their knowledge and skills so they can fortify the safety and health of their job sites and continue to send workers home safe and sound at the end of every work day," said Cory Stengel, chair of the OFB Health & Safety Committee.

The cannabis forum is part of the larger Central Oregon Occupational Safety and Health Conference, which will tackle a range of other workplace health and safety issues.

The forum arrives as Oregon's cannabis industry continues to evolve. The event will address multiple health and safety topics, as well as give participants a question-and-answer session.

Speakers will include representatives from OSHA, the Oregon Liquor Control Commission (OLCC), Oregon Dept. of Agriculture, the Portland and Bend fire departments, and Oregon-based grow and extraction operations.

Topics will include: OLCC requirements, cannabis grow operations, hydrocarbon extraction, carbon dioxide extraction, CO2 and alcohol extraction, fire marshal regulations, pesticide regulations, ergonomic risk factors and Oregon OSHA consultation services.

Registration for the Central Oregon Occupational Safety and Health Conference, which includes the cannabis forum, is now open. The cost to attend ranges from \$55 to \$210.

For more details about the cannabis forum — including specific presentation times and topic areas — or to register, go to <https://safetyseries.cvent.com/central18>.



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