



INDIA POTTER (LEFT), BETH MILTON, BRYANA SMITH AS CINDERELLA'S STEPSISTERS AND STEPMOTHER AND ALEXIS MYLES (SEATED) AS CINDERELLA

INTO THE WILD

ACE vet Mark VanBeever

goes happily never after with *Into the Woods*

A strange species of magical realism pervades Stephen Sondheim's *Into the Woods*, a darkly funny musical that mashes up a handful of our most familiar fairy tales into a salty stew of deviant psychology and romantic dissatisfaction. Keeping the outward trappings of the fables intact, Sondheim douses them with the realpolitik of reality. Hence, Cinderella finds her Prince only so-so, Little Red Riding Hood is a snarky brat and Rapunzel, left alone too long in her tower, is a neurotic mess. The musical deconstructs the Disneyfication of Grimm, putting the lie to decades of sugar-spun wish fulfillment.

There is no better company in town to mount this Sondheim classic than Actors Cabaret of Eugene, and no better director to tackle it than ACE veteran Mark VanBeever, who makes this production his swan song after 15 years with the theater. It's a glorious farewell. From the smoothly choreographed set pieces to the aces-up casting to the rousing musical numbers, *Into the Woods* bears VanBeever's stamp all over it — a distinct combination of smarts, humor, technical savvy and that aura of joy which reveals an unflagging love for musical theater.

Sondheim, with his intricate compositions, presents an uncommon challenge for any director, and VanBeever is not only up to it; he owns it, with a confidence and enthusiasm that spreads into every nook and cranny of the production.

Enthusiasm itself casts a sort of spell, and VanBeever's gusto seems to enchant the show's entire cast, which plays things just right — never too serious, never too silly. Alexis Myles, previously seen as Ti Moune in ACE's *Once On This Island*, is damn near perfect as Cinderella, all street smarts and thwarted hopes. Emily Westlund is a hoot as Riding Hood, transforming this traditional innocent into an entitled teen full of defiant sass. Traci Knights is grand as the Witch, and Zach Ropp and Tony Coslett create great comic chemistry as the princes, a pair of brotherly gallants driven by the insatiable need to pursue every fair maiden. Also good are Tera Ponce (Rapunzel), Cody Mendonca and Melissa Miller (Jack and his mom), Gene Chin and Cindy Kenny (Baker and his wife), as well as Beth Milton, Will Vanderbilt, India Potter and Bryana Smith as Cinderella's adoptive family.

There seems no better tribute to VanBeever and his tenure at ACE than filling the seats for this lovely production of *Into the Woods*. It's the least we can do for this fine artist in our midst.

Into the Woods runs through May 31 at Actors Cabaret of Eugene; \$16-\$42.95. Visit actorscabaret.org/tickets for tickets.

Wellness Centered Dentistry

Individual Care for Individual People



Rob Whicker DDS

A Holistic Approach to
— Dental Care —

541-868-2008
4725 Village Plaza Loop
Ste 101 • Eugene, OR



wcdentistry.com



AMAZON PARK animal clinic

Taking Care of Your Four-Legged Family for Over 30 Years

Introducing Laser Therapy

Class IV Therapeutic Laser

Drug Free, Surgery Free relief for your pet

Call us for more details

Cameron Jones, DVM
Barbara Maki, DVM
Cary Heyward, DVM



Appointments Available 8am-6pm Weekdays 9am-4pm Saturday
info@amazonparkvet.com • 541-485-0161 • 725 E. 25th Ave. Eugene

OCT OREGON CONTEMPORARY THEATRE

"Dangerous and provocative, but
pulverizingly funny to boot" —Variety

"Strong, ferociously smart play" —NY Times

Clybourne Park by Bruce Norris

Pulitzer Prize & Tony Award
Winning Comedy

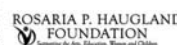
Directed by Craig Willis

May 9 - June 1

Now in our new theatre!
194 West Broadway
Tickets: 541-465-1506
or octheatre.org



Thanks to our sponsors:



Summer Camps start July 7!

Shakespeare Camp, July 7 - 19
(Grades 7-12)

Fractured Fairytales, July 21 - Aug. 2
(Grades 3 - 6)



Register at www.octheatre.org or call (541) 684.6988

THE PROM For Grownups

JOANNE BROH Band w/Deb Cleveland and Gus Russell
Jivin' Johnny from KRVM

Fun contests: Limbo | Costume | Dance

Photo Booth | Silent Auction | Over 21 only

MAY 17, 7:30 - Midnight - Vet's Club Ballroom

A Benefit for KindTree-Autism Rocks



tickets
\$15 one
\$25 two
kindtree.org