



Cast members in Astor Street Opry Co.'s 'A Midsummer Night's Dream: The Musical.'

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# Astoria's youth take on magic and adventure with Shakespeare's help

## Opry company presents 'A Midsummer Night's Dream: The Musical'

BY EMILY LINDBLOM

Astor Street Opry Company's annual youth show will take audiences to Shakespearean times.

The company will present "A Midsummer Night's Dream: The Musical" Friday through Feb. 16. The show will feature musical numbers, modernized dialogue and a cast of young people.

The musical explores the tale of Theseus and Hippolyta, who are supposed to get married within days. The story's focus quickly is shifted away from the couple though, as a love triangle takes primary focus.

The love triangle includes Hermia and

two suitors, Lysander and Demetrius. Throughout the days leading up to Theseus and Hippolyta's wedding, Hermia and her two suitors are taken on an adventure including a fairy queen, a getaway plan and a love-binding spell.

The Shakespearean romantic comedy has been turned into a musical for children, said musical director Patricia VonVintage. One young actor even gets to play William Shakespeare.

"Shakespeare comes back from the grave really upset at how they're portraying the play," VonVintage said.

But the audience can still expect to see the magic and romance of the original play, VonVintage said.

VonVintage acted in Shakespeare plays during high school and is happy to feature one as the annual youth show.

Every February, the youth shows offer children a start in the world of theater, in the hopes they will continue acting in the

future, VonVintage said.

"It's mainly for the future of our actors," VonVintage said. "I had the chance in school to learn about it and I found that I loved acting."

Kids in this year's production are friendly and inviting to each other, VonVintage added.

"Getting to teach them about Shakespeare has been really fun," VonVintage said. "It's great to see their dedication."

Astor Street Opry Company has hosted shows for 35 years, operating off of ticket sales and fundraisers as a nonprofit and is known for its longtime running show, "Shanghaied in Astoria."

"It's volunteer-based so the actors come out because they love it," VonVintage said. "A lot of people have been in it for a long time."

But a couple years ago, Astor Street

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