

Shakespeare plays return to Cannon Beach park

Players celebrate theater's 50th anniversary with community shows

BY KATHERINE LACAZE

Both longtime fans of The Bard and those newly acquainted with William Shakespeare's work will be entertained and enlightened as actors from the Coaster Theatre Playhouse return for a third Shakespeare in the park program, performed outdoors in Cannon Beach.

"His characters and his stories are universal," play director Patrick Lathrop said, "they never grow old."

Performances are ongoing throughout the month. In case of inclement weather, shows will move from the park to the theater. One special performance on June 29, which will take place in the courtyard by the theater, will run in conjunction with the Coaster's 50th anniversary celebration.

The theme for this year's rendition of Shakespeare in the Park is "Ghosts, Fairies and Spirits." The event encapsulates several elements from the original version, "Don't Fear Shakespeare (in the Park)," presented in 2020, as well as last year's variation, "60 Second Shakespeare." Eventually, if Lathrop continues the summer program in future years, he plans to meld the best aspects of all three into one "Shakesperience" piece to present annually.

Capturing the human condition

The program's aim is to make Shakespeare productions accessible and approachable for modern audiences by presenting a few narrated choice works. Audiences will also enjoy period songs, recitations of Shakespearean sonnets and a splattering of insults and vocabulary words popular in the Elizabethan era.

However, for this year's theme, Lathrop has added scenes that deal with the supernatural – ghosts, fairies, spirits and the like. For example, audiences will meet the witches from "Macbeth," the ghost of Hamlet's father, and the fairies featured in "A Midsummer Night's Dream."



Katherine Lacaze

ABOVE: The cast of 'Shakesperience: Ghosts, Fairies and Spirits,' includes, from left, Leonard Hoge, Leo McDonald-Goldstein, Margaret Hammitt-McDonald and Seth Goldstein.

RIGHT: Actors present a performance at last year's Shakespeare event in Cannon Beach.

"It's been enjoyable to settle on a combination of scenes and poetry, and it's a lot of fun to interact with the audience outside," volunteer actor Margaret Hammitt-McDonald said. This year's program

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