

Oregon Shakespeare Festival Actor G. Valmont Thomas Dies

2018 season, which would have been Thomas' 15th, will be dedicated to his memory

Oregon Shakespeare Festival

ASHLAND, ORE. — Gregory Valmont Thomas, a 14-season member of the Oregon Shakespeare Festival acting company, passed away early on Monday, Dec. 18, in Ashland after a battle with cancer. OSF's 2018 season will be dedicated to the man who worked under the name G. Valmont Thomas but was better known to his friends and colleagues as G. Val.

"G. Val passed away



Gregory Valmont Thomas

surrounded by many of the family and friends who have taken such good care of him during

his illness," said OSF Artistic Director Bill Rauch. "I am filled with gratitude to have known this man so great of artistry and so generous of spirit. Indeed, one of his last acts was to make a donation to OSF's Rex Rabold Fund in order to 'pay back' the company for the care and help he received from so many."

Besides being the only OSF actor to have played Sir John Falstaff in all three Shakespeare plays that feature that character, his versatility was evident by the breadth of

his roles in both classic and new work.

Thomas performed approximately 60 roles in his 14 years at OSF. His first season at the Festival was in 1998, when he played Francis Flute in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and Snake in *The School for Scandal*. He remained a member of the OSF acting company every season through 2012, appearing in a wide range of roles including Simonides in *Pericles* (1999), *Mistress Quickly* in *Henry IV, Part Two* (1999), *Feste*

in *Twelfth Night* (2000), *Macbeth* in *Macbeth* (2002), *Boy Willie* in *The Piano Lesson* (2003), *Lincoln* in *Topdog/Underdog* (2004), *Falstaff* in *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (2006), *Solly* in *Two Kings in Gem of the Ocean* (2007), *Gabriel* in *Fences* (2008), *Soothsayer* in *Antony and Cleopatra* (2003), *Melchior* in *On the Razzle* (2007) and *Blue* in *Party People* (2012). He also served as assistant director of *The African Company Presents Richard III* (2011).

In 2017, Thomas re-

turned to the OSF company to play Falstaff in *Henry IV, Parts One and Two*. In October of this year, the Ashland Daily Tidings reported on Thomas' stage IV prostate cancer battle and shared news of a crowd-funding campaign set up by friends that ultimately raised over \$53,000 for his medical care.

"They knew the risks," Thomas, who was diagnosed in 2013, said of OSF in the article. "With chemo, my hair would fall off during performances."

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