



The Fantasticks cast members Thomas Guastavino as "Matt" and Ashlee Winkler as "Luisa"

THEATER from *A1*

drive their children to fall in love. The thing I like is that the story doesn't end at happy ever after. We get to see what happens when the sun rises on the new love. The morning after, as it is. Things fall rapidly apart, and seem to just be on the verge of shattering forever. Then, well, I don't want to spoil the whole thing.

Usually in this show, 'the wall' is played by an actor that never speaks. What approach did you take to the wall separating Luisa and Matt?

The character of The Mute, played here by Sophie Blades, is such an integral part of the show. The Mute has to be so many things in this show. Moving props, providing scenery pieces, and generally helping to move the show along, but at the same time, still be a character, still be part of the show. Really, to suggest a wall it's as simple as a couple cubes to stand on and a stick held between Matt and Luisa. We played around with this concept that The Mute is almost somewhat magical. Building these places for the other characters to play around in. It's quite fun to watch, and such a fun part of the show.

What was the audition process like for this

show? Are there familiar Cottage Theatre faces?

The audition process was quite straight forward. Come in, sing a song of your choosing, then sing and read some selections from the play. I had a great turnout, and could have cast the show several different ways. There is such an abundance of talent in this area, it's quite astonishing. And it makes it so hard sometimes. There are a few familiar faces in this show, plus a couple of new ones. I have been so humbly honored that they have given me so much trust and so much of their talent.

This is the last show of the season at Cottage Theatre. Does that add anything to the pressure of directing?

Thankfully, it's only the last show of the season, not the last one before we shut down for a few months. That honor falls to "Sound of Music." But there is always pressure being the last show of the season. You want to

end on a high note, something memorable to encourage the patrons to come back next season. To keep the energy level high. You want to really show people what you, as a company, are capable of.

As a director, how do you think the remodel, that will essentially reformat the theatre's seating, will affect future shows?

It opens up so many possibilities for staging and sight lines. It gives us many more opportunities to utilize the full depth of our stage.

In my mind, it brings us more to that professional level standard that myself and so many others strive for each show. I am very excited to see how each director is going to use the space in the coming years.

We have already done some amazing shows, and had some truly breathtaking sets. I think this is really going to be something special.

Why should people

come out and see "The Fantasticks?"

It is truly a magical show. There is no other way to put it. Something in these enchanting songs, in the clever lines, strike down to the deepest parts of your heart.

Each member of my cast has poured so many hours and so much of their soul into each and every part of this play, and it really shows. There are sweet moments, funny moments, and moments that will leave you crying.

And it's always important to support local art, and local artists doing what they love doing.

"The Fantasticks" opens this Friday, Nov. 30 and runs through Dec. 16. For more information or to purchase tickets, visit cottagetheatre.org.

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<i>Friday, November 30</i>	<i>4:00pm to 8:00pm</i>
<i>Saturday, December 1</i>	<i>10:00am to 8:00pm</i>
<i>Sunday, December 2</i>	<i>11:00am to 3:00pm</i>

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Fill out the form below to have your organization's holiday bazaar included in the bazaar listing in the Cottage Grove Sentinel each Wednesday during the holidays. Cost for this service is \$45.00 for a 1x3 advertisement, 50 words or less. Please enclose check or money order if mailing in this listing. Call us at 541-942-3325 for more information. **Deadline is NOON, Thursday for the following week's publication.** Must be pre-paid to be accepted.

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