

Q&A with 'Snow Queen' director Judy Smith

By Caitlyn May
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How did you become involved in theatre in Cottage Grove?

I own the Storybook Theatre. It's independent of Opal Center but I rent the space. Originally, I directed shows at Cottage Theatre in the past and my kids went to school at Ace Charter School.

There was a need there for some theatre instruction so I volunteered and it went over so well it turned into a business.

I attempt to do three shows a year and this is the winter show. It's more advanced, more detailed. I chose the "Snow Queen" because almost all of the shows I do, I take from the public domain and adapt the script... I

always choose something that inspires me.

What was your inspiration for "Snow Queen?"

With Snow Queen I was talking to a four-year-old girl-and I always ask the kids what we should do next — and she said "Frozen" and I laughed because I know it's such a popular story with little ones these days. But with Storybook, I want to teach children literature as well as theatre so I research as far back as I can and often the real story is much more dark than kids realize today. So, when this little girl said "Frozen," it got me thinking, "Frozen" is so popular, I should let kids know the real story which is different than today's.

What is the basic story of "Snow Queen?"

There's a lot of symbolism in the whole story and it's about friendship and goodness overcoming evil. It's a beautiful message to teach the kids... A devil creates a looking glass and anyone who looks into it only sees the negativity and evil in the world and the beauty vanishes. He orders his minions to spread this over the world and in their struggle, it breaks into a million pieces. A little boy and girl are on a rooftop and the boy gets a piece of the glass in his eye and his heart and turns into a rude little boy, completely against his character and is kidnapped by the Snow Queen. The story is the journey of the little girl and her kind heart and everything she gives up to find and save this little boy.

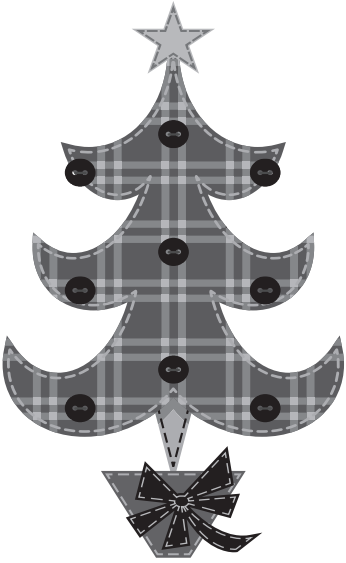
What should audiences look out for in the production?

There are 22 kids in the show ages 10 to 19 and it is darker than you would typically expect, so make sure your kids can handle that.

The "Snow Queen" is playing this Friday and Saturday at 7 p.m. and Sunday at 3 p.m. at the Opal Arts Center. For more information, visit opalcenter.org.

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