

Ten days of Shakespeare

Festival is June 17-26 in Elgin

By Jennifer Colton

For Go! Magazine

ELGIN — The works of Shakespeare come alive in the 2022 Opera House Shakespeare Festival, a 10-day event that will include live performances and special events.

The festival is the inaugural event by the Opera House Shakespeare Company, a branch of the Elgin Opera House helmed by Grant Turner. Turner said the inspiration for the festival was seeing a need in the community.

"There's an untapped market in Eastern Oregon for classical theater produced unadorned and easily accessible," Turner said. "I always look forward to the idea of introducing an audience to Shakespeare, to a new experience."

The festival features multiple performances of four separate Shakespearean plays, each on a different stage, from Friday, June 17, to Saturday, June 26:

- Hale Turner Little Theatre: "A Merchant of Venice" (a six-person adaptation of "The Merchant of Venice") — 7:30 p.m. June 17; 2 p.m. June 18; 7 p.m. June 19; 7:30 p.m. June 22; 7:30 p.m. June 24; 2 p.m. June 25

- Jewel Theatre: "Othello" — 7:30 p.m. June 18; 2 p.m. June 19; 7:30 p.m. June 23; 7:30 p.m. June 25; 2 p.m. June 26

- Elgin Opera House, outdoor stage: Opera House Youth Actors present "A Midsummer Night's Dream" — 5 p.m. June 18; 5 p.m. June 19; 5 p.m. June 25; 5 p.m. June 26

- Elgin Opera House, main stage: "Two Gentlemen of Verona" — 7:30 p.m. June 22; 7:30 p.m. June 23

In addition to the performances, the festival includes multiple events with special guests and festival ambassadors Imogen Stubbs, British stage and screen actress; Jonathan Guy Lewis, actor and playwright; and actor Bobby Bermea (also playing the lead role in "Othello"). All three ambassadors are scheduled for

Shakespearean workshops and special events, including Q&A sessions, an afternoon tea and a staged reading of "Soldier On," written by Lewis.

Turner said the festival will also include workshops on performing, costumes and the stage. There will be a free children's workshop June 20-24, from 11 a.m.-3 p.m. each day.

The Shakespeare Festival opens on Friday, June 17, with an opening night party with professional actor Bobby Bermea, followed by the U.S. premiere of "A Merchant of Venice" in the Hale Turner Little Theatre. Both events are open to VIP ticket holders.

On June 18 and 19, visitors can take in one, two or three separate Shakespeare works. The event continues during the week and on weekends with events, workshops and plays.

"There's something going on every day," Turner said. "If someone wanted to, they could experience something new and something they hadn't seen before every day of the festival."



Jennifer Colton/Go! Magazine

Proteus (right, played by Carly Elder) stops Speed (Christian Quinlin Pullen) on his way to Milan in "Two Gentlemen of Verona." The play is one of four Shakespearean works best performed at the 2022 Opera House Shakespeare Festival in Elgin.

SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL VENUES

Elgin Opera House: 104 N. Eighth Ave.

Hale Turner Little Theatre & Jewel Theatre: 831 Alder St.

Tickets: Tickets for individual plays and VIP Festival passes are available at elginoperahouse.com/shakespeare.

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