

Wilkes University Theatre will present William Shakespeare's *As You Like It*, a comedic play full of wit and romance, at 8 p.m. on April 10, 11 & 12, and at 2 p.m. on April 12 & 13 in the Dorothy Dickson Darte Center for the Performing Arts, 239 S. River St., Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania.

As You Like It explores themes of freedom, love, identity, nature and culture. Between battling brothers with murderous schemes, families banishing family members and characters disguising themselves to escape persecution, the audience can expect comedic misunderstandings, romances and reconciliations in the Forest of Arden.

Jon Liebetrau, director, associate professor and chair of the theatre department, believes that at the heart of *As You Like It* is, indeed, the heart.

"This play, even with its many varied themes, boils down to a true love story, with many couples finding love and acceptance," says Liebetrau.

Hearts aside, producing a Shakespearean play such as this is no easy feat. Students and faculty worked together to deep dive into Shakespeare's complex and compelling characters, break down the structure and language to deliver in a way that translates to the audience and bring the setting to life through the costumes and overall production design.

"Mastering the language, structure and rich imagery of classical text is an invaluable tool for developing theatrical oral presentation skills," says Liebetrau. "We aim to produce plays and musicals in a variety of styles to train actors in handling the diverse range of styles they will encounter in their careers."

What makes this production of *As You Like It* unique is its setting in late 1960s America. According to Liebetrau, the audience can look forward to, "Nostalgic music from the Woodstock era, 1960s costume and scenic design and a *groovy* time with plenty of laughs and love sighs." Not only is the setting fun and entertaining, but the 1960s aligns thematically with the story, specifically the culture and counterculture elements.

The cast features Antonio Torres (Orlando), John Quick (Oliver), Jesse Lawson (Adam/William), Kasey Karoll (Rosalind), Isabella Ruiz (Celia), Caleb Flannery (Touchstone), Anthony Kehs (Duke Senior), Evan Cole (Duke Frederick/Corin), Elias Brix (Charles/Silvius), Ella Villani (Le Beau), Melissa Reyes (First Lord, attending Frederick), Jacob Cintronelle (Second Lord, attending Frederick), Alby Lopuhovsky (Jaques), Rocco Pugliese (Amiens), Madelyn Rex (First Lord, attending senior), Alexis Wesnak (Sir Oliver Martext/Second Lord, attending senior), Elena DiSciullo (Phoebe), Hope Jacobus (Audrey) and Maddie Meier (Priest/Hymen).

The production team includes Jon Liebetrau, associate professor and chair of the theatre department (director and sound designer), Vandy Scoates, assistant professor of theatre (scenic and lighting designer), Lisa Liebetrau (costume

designer), Spencer Shotto (technical director), Caleb Gething (assistant technical director), Noah Dixon (assistant lighting designer), Lavender Ibrahim (assistant scenic designer), Ryan Starr (production stage manager), Gabrielle Greffen (assistant stage manager) and Sarah Pugliese (assistant stage manager).

As You Like It

8 p.m. Thursday, April 10

8 p.m. Friday, April 11

2 p.m. Saturday, April 12

8 p.m. Saturday, April. 12

2 p.m. Sunday, April 13

Tickets are available online at wilkes.edu/theatre. Cost is \$15 for general admission, \$10 for non-Wilkes students/senior citizens and free for Wilkes students, faculty and staff. The box office will open one hour before curtain for purchases in person.