

Shakespeare fest worth some more

OUT&ABOUT

Posted 2 days ago

Let's give a little perspective to this column.

It's Thursday, July 16 and it also (remarkably) a glorious sunny afternoon. That is especially ironic given that today - the first day of my summer holidays - it was supposed to rain. Grrrr.

Yes, I did say holidays, yet here I sit at my desk, much to the dismay of my colleagues. Earlier this week I had tucked three weeks worth of columns away in the proverbial publishing can in preparation for this monumental event.

Yet, I feel compelled to trudge back to the office and rewrite this one.

Why? Simple.

Because I was blown away by the St. Lawrence Shakespeare Festival's opening of Measure for Measure last night in Prescott.

"Yeah, yeah," I can hear some of you saying. "They got airtime in the column last week, and here she is (again) yacking about them.

"What about us?"

Well, too bad, so sad, is my retort. I feel compelled to tell you about it. You must know.

Artistic director Ian Farthing told me a couple of weeks back this little-done play was amongst his favourites. Honestly, other than reading publicity material about it, plus a little research on my own, I didn't know dickydo about Measure.

Some nun who pleads with a bad guy to save her brother's life. C'est ça.

Oh, Lord what fools (me included) these mortals be!

It is an incredibly profound play that gives you pause for thought about human emotions, motivations and relationships. At times, you laugh out loud with the hilarity of it, at others you sit questioning the human soul.

Director Craig Walker has done a superb job.

Casting honestly could not have been better, and Kris Joseph as Angelo/Claudio and Emma Hunter as Isabella, truly outdid themselves. Isabella, as the beautiful would-be nun, comes to plead for Claudio's (yes, you read correctly . . . Kris plays bad guy and good guy) life.

Thing is, Angelo is, umm, rather attracted to her and hopes to make her an offer she can't refuse. But she does.

I think it's a testament to Kris' acting that it wasn't until he came on-stage the second time as Claudio that it tweaked me that he was performing dual roles. I just hadn't bothered to look all the way down the playbill listing at who-was-doing-who, and boy, was I impressed.

What a duality of not only parts for him, but for Kris/Emma as they interacted on totally different levels within the very same play.

Go see the play for this reason alone.

Yet, there is more. The whole cast works dynamically together, the costuming is beautiful, the singing exquisite.

Again, see it.

The production continues in tandem with *The Taming of the Shrew* until Aug. 15. On Saturdays, both plays are performed so you could make a day of it.

You won't be disappointed.

Okay, that feels better. Back to my holidays.

Today

* TGN *The Grand Nellu*, La Maison

* *Steel Magnolias*, Seaway Valley Theatre Company, Lamoureux Park at 7:30 p. m.

* Alice Cooper Tribute with Gamut, Phatty Kats

Sunday, June 26

* Ashley MacLeod, Glengarry Music Festival, Alexandria. Luncheon at 12:30 p. m., show at 2 p. m. Call 613-525-1466.

* *The Beethoven String Quartets: Part 2*, Festival Alexandria, Abbey for the Arts, Glen Nevis at 3 p. m. Call 613-347-1602.

* Graham Greer, *Arts in the Park*, Lamoureux Park at 2 p. m.

Thursday, July 30

* *Bang on the Ear* with Neil Emberg, Atlantic Pub, Alexandria

* Graham Greer, *East Side Mario's*

* Nick Seguin/Steph McAlear, *Arts in the Park*, Lamoureux Park at 7 p. m.

Friday, July 31

* Glengarry Highland Games, Maxville from 8 a. m.; Metcalfe Centre -Greenfield Trio, The Tents -Hadrian's Wall with Neil Emberg, from 2 to 9 p. m.; Tattoo at 7 p. m.

ONGOING:

* *The Taming of the Shrew/Measure for Measure*, St. Lawrence Shakespeare Festival, Prescott. Until Aug. 15. Call 613- 925-5788 for details.

* *Wrong for Each Other*, Upper Canada Playhouse, Morrisburg. Until Aug. 2. Call 613-543-3713 for details.

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