Much Ado About Nothing

By William Shakespeare
Directed by Melanie Keller

JULY 25 - AUG 31

THANK YOU TO OUR 2019 SEASON SPONSORS

July 25–August 31, 2019 | Austin Gardens | Oak Park, Illinois
DTOP 2019 EVENTS
learn more at www.downtownoakpark.net

Events subject to change

THURSDAY NIGHT OUT
Every Thursday
May 30th - August 29th,
5PM-9PM

SHOP OUTDOOR SALE
July 11th - July 14th

ART DANS LA RUE
Tuesday,
August 6th,
2PM-9PM

MICROBREW REVIEW
August 17th

UNCORK ILLINOIS
Saturday,
June 15th,
1PM-9PM

OAKTOBERFEST
September 20th - 21st,
(Friday 4PM-10PM,
Saturday 12-10PM)

WINTERFEST
December, 7th

HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS
December 21st,
11AM-3PM
WEATHER—WILL THE SHOW GO ON?

We will always do our best to present our plays in their entirety. Unfortunately, Mother Nature is not always cooperative, and we have to keep the safety of our cast, crew, and audience in mind at all times.

WEATHER CONDITIONS:

Sometimes a light rain will break out during a performance. We may continue to play through a light rain, or pause and allow you to seek cover until it blows over and then resume.

A downpour or the presence of lightning will cancel a performance. Your ticket will serve as your “rain check”.

IF A SHOW IS CANCELED DUE TO WEATHER:

If the show is canceled at any point, your ticket/wristband will automatically become a “Rain Check”.

To redeem your ticket for a rained out show at any performance, all you need to do is give your name and rained-out performance’s date at the Box Office to attend any of our remaining performance nights for the rest of the season.

If it is not possible for you to return to a future performance, please contact the box office at tickets@oakparkfestival.com or 708-300-9396 x101 to make other arrangements.

Thank you for your understanding.

Mary Liming
Box Office Manager
Dear Friends,

Happy 45th Anniversary Season! For the last 45 years, we have been bringing theatre to Austin Gardens in downtown Oak Park, and we could not be more excited to share this milestone season with you! Our 45th season promises to continue not only our rich legacy of professional theatre, but what we have always felt to be the very spirit of Shakespeare—exploring our humanity.

We are examining the role of gender in our lives more closely than ever before. What does it mean to be masculine, or feminine—both, or neither? What limitations are there in being a woman…or a man? In the workplace and in our personal lives, we continue to ask: Who is stronger? Who is more trustworthy? How does each need the other? Our summer shows, Elizabeth Rex and Much Ado About Nothing, bring this conversation to the forefront with our 2019 Summer Season “O, That I Were a Man…”

We also believe that we are only stronger when we take the lessons that we learn onstage and continue the conversation that it starts in our everyday lives. This year, Oak Park Festival Theatre engaged Lurie Children’s Hospital of Chicago’s education and outreach team to host a workshop on the “Creation of Gender Inclusive Environments” to explore how we can strive to create a more inclusive environment, from our stage to our audience and to our boardroom.

In addition to our traditional summer season of outdoor plays, this spring we were also honored to present, in cooperation with Open Door Repertory, Lauren Gunderson’s funny and poignant I & You, which received rave reviews and allowed us to examine the intimate relationship and gift of organ donation.

This fall we are excited to enter a brand new partnership. For the first time, we will be producing The Madness of Edgar Allan Poe: A Love Story at Cheney Mansion! Audiences will be guided from room to room through Oak Park’s historic Cheney Mansion, taking you from the garrets to the dungeons…and deep into a tortured mind, teetering on the brink of sanity. Come and experience favorites like The Pit and the Pendulum, The Tell-Tale Heart and The Masque of the Red Death as you’ve never heard or seen them before!

Our work continues to be surprising, touching and powered by bringing fresh life to classic stories. We could never have made it to a 45th Anniversary Season without YOU, our loyal audience. It is for you and only with your help that we come to the gardens each year and build a theater from scratch. We wish to thank our loyal audience, as well as those individuals, businesses, arts agencies, and foundations that support us with their generous donations and gifts. Without you, we simply would not exist. Together we are striving to create not only great theatre, but also that more humane world that we all seek.

Sincerely,

Anne Rooney
President, Board of Directors

Jhenai Mootz
Managing Director

Barbara Zahora
Artistic Director
When Artistic Director Barbara Zahora asked me if I was interested in directing *Much Ado About Nothing* for Oak Park Festival Theatre, I responded with an enthusiastic yes, not only because it’s a play I love, but also because recently, some elements in it had begun to trouble me and I wanted to investigate them.

This is one of Shakespeare’s most beloved comedies. Beatrice and Benedick are the original “will they/won’t they” couple; their verbal sparring is legendary. And Dogberry, the King of Malapropisms, is one of Shakespeare’s most iconic clowns.

The language and characters are so indelible, that they sometimes obscure the hideous injustice at the heart of the story, inflicted not only by the self-identified villain, but also by the ‘good guys.’ In light of current conversations around women’s autonomy, the ways in which the women in the play are betrayed, muzzled and disbelieved struck me as untenable in a whole new way. Without abandoning any of the rich comedy, I wanted us to examine the gender dynamics at play, and to make space for the women to have more agency in this world.

At the heart of this play is love—romantic love, familial love, love between friends. Love in all its forms is complicated, and requires communication, consent and trust. How will our characters rebuild trust? And will they all be able to go forward together with a new understanding of what it means to have respect and equity in love?

I hope you will enjoy all of the familiar things you love about *Much Ado About Nothing* but will also see it with new eyes.

—Melanie Keller
Director

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**February 29, 2020, 2:30 pm to 9 pm**
**Unity Temple, Oak Park, Illinois**

Four concerts in one — a song recital, chamber music & piano works performed by members of the Chicago Symphony & Lyric Opera Orchestras, featuring pianist **Winston Choi** & operatic tenor **Lawrence Brownlee**.

For tickets and information visit [www.schubertfestivalunitytemple.org](http://www.schubertfestivalunitytemple.org)
THE CAST (IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE)

Messenger..............................................................................................................................Jordan Arredondo
Leonato, Governor of Messina..............................................................................................Patrick Blashill
Hero, daughter of Leonato ....................................................................................................Tina El Gamal
Beatrice, niece of Leonato ........................................................................................................Eunice Woods*
Margaret, waiting gentlewoman to Hero............................................................................Lizzie Bourne
Ursula, sister of Leonato ..........................................................................................................Noelle Klyce
Balthasar, son of Ursula ..........................................................................................................Anna Civik
Don Pedro, Prince of Aragon ..................................................................................................Peter Sipla
Benedick, lord and companion of Don Pedro .........................................................................Bryan Wakefield*†
Claudio, count and companion of Don Pedro ......................................................................Ian Michael Minh
Don John, illegitimate brother of Don Pedro ..........................................................................Bret Tuomi*
Conrade, follower of Don John ............................................................................................William Burdin
Borachio, follower of Don John ..............................................................................................Nick Caesar
Friar Francis ..........................................................................................................................Rio Ragazzone†
Dogberry, Master Constable ...............................................................................................Bret Tuomi*
Verges, Dogberry’s partner .................................................................................................Jordan Arredondo
1st Watch ....................................................................................................................................Anna Civik
2nd Watch ...................................................................................................................................Tina El Gamal
George Seacoal ........................................................................................................................Rio Ragazzone†
Sexton .........................................................................................................................................Lizzie Bourne

Place: Messina
Time: Just after the war
2 hour running time. There will be one 15-minute intermission

UNDERSTUDIES

For Beatrice—Noelle Klyce; For Benedick—Peter Sipla;
For Don John & Dogberry—Nick Caesar; For Claudio—William Burdin;
For Borachio—Rio Ragazzone†; For Don Pedro & Leonato—Michael Meiners;
For Friar Francis & George Seacoal—Timothy Sullivan; For Hero & 2nd Watch—Anna Civik;
For Margaret & Sexton—Catherine Healey‡; For Verges & Messenger—Lily Chrones‡;
For Balthasar & 1st Watch—Joshua Stein‡;
For Ursula—Margaret Garofalo; For Conrade—Meredith Rupp‡

Understudies never substitute for listed performers unless announced at the time of the performance

*Member of Actors’ Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers
†Oak Park Festival Theatre Company Member
‡Summer Intern
**PRODUCTION STAFF**

Director ..............................................................................................................Melanie Keller*
Assistant Director .............................................................................................Brianna Jones‡
Text Coach .........................................................................................................Tony Dobrowolski*†
Stage Manager .................................................................................................Leigh Barrett*†
Production Manager ..........................................................................................Melanie Thompson
Set Design ..........................................................................................................Nicholas James Schwartz
Lighting Design .................................................................................................Megan Turnquist
Original Music/Sound Design ..........................................................................George Zahora†
Costume Design ..................................................................................................Rachel Lambert
Props Design ......................................................................................................Jamie Karas
Intimacy and Violence Design ...........................................................................Mark Lancaster†
Master Electrician ..............................................................................................Becs Bartle
Assistant Costume Design & Wardrobe Master ...................................................Gary Nocco
Assistant Stage Managers ................................................................................Megan Flanery‡, Meredith Rupp‡
Technical Director .............................................................................................Brian Sprague
Sound Operators ..............................................................................................Matthew Rohan‡, Max Martin‡
Light Operator ...................................................................................................Joshua Stein‡
House Management ............................................................................................Dakotah Brown‡
Box Office Assistants .....................................................................................Leanne Hays‡, Brianna Jones‡
Concessions .......................................................................................................Lily Chrones‡, Megan Flanery‡
Photographer ....................................................................................................Jhenai Mootz†

**OAK PARK FESTIVAL THEATRE STAFF**

Park Operations & Finance Manager ................................................................Robert W. Behr*
Casting Director .................................................................................................Lucy Carr
Box Office Manager ............................................................................................Mary Liming
Managing Director ..............................................................................................Jhenai Mootz†
Administrative Assistant ..................................................................................Rae Segbawu
Artistic Director .................................................................................................Barbara Zahora*

**2019 INTERNS**

Dakotah Brown ............................................................. University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, Class of 2020
Lily Chrones ......................................................................................................Boston Conservatory, Class of 2021
Megan Flanery ...................................................................................................Los Medanos College, Class of 2023
Leanne Hays .....................................................................................................Roosevelt University-Chicago College of Performing Arts, Class of 2022
Catherine Healey ..............................................................................................Connecticut College, Class of 2018
Brianna Jones ....................................................................................................University of Tennessee Chattanooga, Class of 2019
Max Martin .............................................................The Neighborhood Playhouse School of the Theatre, Class of 2020
Matthew Rohan .................................................................................................University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Class of 2022
Meredith Rupp .................................................................................................Kenyon College, Class of 2019
Joshua Stein .....................................................................................................Rider University, Class of 2022
Sarah Valeika ....................................................................................................Yale University, Class of 2022
CAST PROFILES

Jordan Arredondo (Verges and Messenger) is thrilled to making his Oak Park Festival Theatre debut! His previous Chicago credits include: First Love is the Revolution (Basti) at Steep Theatre Company; American Jornalero (Marcelo) at Teatro Vista, Romeo and Juliet (Romeo) at Teatro Vista, Waiting for Godot (Lucky) at Tympanic Theatre, The Party House (Jake) at the Runaways Lab Theater. TV/Film Credits include: Chicago Fire, Killing Eleanor, Defer, and Binx. He graduated with his B.F.A. in Acting from the School of Theatre and Music at the University of Illinois at Chicago. Jordan is represented by Gray Talent Group. Jordan would like to give a big thanks to his family, the Gray fam, and Sabrina for all the endless love and support.

Patrick Blashill (Leonato) is really excited to perform in his first show at the Festival and to work with such an outstanding cast. An ensemble member of Lifeline since 1996, Patrick has performed in roughly 30 plays there, favorites include Towny in Midnight Cowboy, Old Bailey and the Earl in Neverwhere, Edgar Drake in The Piano Tuner (After Dark Award: Outstanding Performance), Victor in Lizard Music, Hugh Thane in The Talisman Ring, Tom in Pistols for Two (Non-Equity Jeff nomination: Ensemble), Ferdinand the Bull in The Story of Ferdinand, the Mighty Gorilla in The Snarkout Boys and the Avocado of Death (remounted for Chicago Theatre on the Air with guest star Brent Spiner), and Bunter in Strong Poison (Non-Equity Jeff nomination: Ensemble). He is especially proud to have acted in all three of Lifeline’s Lord of the Rings trilogy, spanning The Fellowship of the Ring (Bilbo Baggins), The Two Towers (Frodo Baggins), and The Return of the King (Frodo Baggins). Patrick has worked with numerous other Chicago theatres, including The Factory (May the Road Rise Up), Griffin (The Harvest) Eclipse Theatre (Long Day’s Journey Into Night), Theatre Mir (The Sea), Backstage Theatre Company (A Number), Filament Theatre (Eurydice), and Reverie Theatre (Emma). A graduate of the American Academy of Dramatic Arts in NYC, Patrick is represented by Gray Talent and has appeared in several episodes of Chicago PD as well as a number of commercials.

Lizzie Bourne (Margaret and Sexton) Lizzie is very chuffed to be back at Oak Park this summer after You Can’t Take It With You last year. Other credits include -Theatre: Yen (u/s, Raven Theatre), Cuzco (reading, Theatre 503), Dough! (Creative Scene); The Picture of Dorian Gray (White Bear); The Glorious Damnation of Eddie Small (Union Theatre/Bedlam). R&D: everything that rises must dance (Complicite), I AM BEAST (Sparkle and Dark). Radio: Home Front (BBC Radio 4). Film: Pride and Prejudice and Gays (Columbia College), The Falling (BBC, Carol Morley), and Ramanujan (Camphor). Lizzie trained at the Oxford School of Drama, and holds a BA from The University of Nottingham and an MSc from The University of Edinburgh.

Will Burdin (Conrade) is humbled to be working for the first time with Oak Park Festival Theatre. Other Chicago credits include: Shakespeare In Love (Chicago Shakespeare); The Temperamentals, Significant Other, (About Face Theatre), Out of the Blue, The Good Doctor, Picasso at the Lapin Agile, Tartuffe, Macbeth, (Organic Theater Company); Twelfth Night (Midsommer Flight); The Dancing Plague (Right Brain Project); and The Tempest (Suitcase Shakespeare). Regional credits
include Hamlet, Two Gentlemen of Verona, Les Liaisons Dangereuse, and Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead (American Players Theatre). Will received his BFA in acting from Northern Illinois University, has studied at the Moscow Art Theatre in Russia, and is a company member at the Organic Theater Company here in Chicago.

Nick Caesar (Borachio) is overjoyed to be making his Oak Park Festival debut! Nick is from Kansas City and is a graduate of Columbia College Chicago. Previous credits include: Pericles (Muse of Fire), When the Rain Stops Falling (Circle Theatre), Psmith Journalist (City Lit), Merry Christmas Mulch Pile (Mercy Street), Book of Disquiet (Blue Elephant Theatre, London) and Chicago Fire (NBC). Nick would like to thank his friends and family for all their support, and hopes you enjoy the show! Nick is represented by DDO Artists Agency Chicago.

Tina El Gamal (Hero and 2nd Watch) is a Chicago-based actor, and theatre artist. She is thrilled to be making her Oak Park Festival Theatre debut! Tina is a recent graduate of the University of Illinois at Chicago, where she received her BFA in Acting. Her recent credits include: the Chicago premiere of I Call My Brothers (Interrobang Theatre Project), Cash Cows—A Staged Reading (Artemisia Theatre), the world premiere of Through the Elevated Line (Silk Road Rising), and florissant and canfield (UIC Theatre). Tina is represented by NV Talent Theatre.

Lily Chrones‡ (Understudy Verges and Messenger) Please see Intern Profile

Anna Civik (Balthasar and Musician and 1st Watch) is thrilled to be working with OPFT this summer! Anna is a proud graduate of Northwestern’s theatre program. Recent credits include The Wolves (Flint Repertory Theatre), Little Foxes (Citadel), Dark at the Top of the Stairs (Eclipse), After (Barrens), The Whisper Network (Piven Theatre Workshop), Twelfth Night (Midsommer Flight), and Wrinkle in Time (Lifeline). Many thanks to her family and friends for their endless support! Anna is represented by Big Mouth Talent. anna-civik.com

Margaret Garofalo (Understudy Ursula) This is Margaret’s fifth project with OPFT. She holds a BFA in Dramatic Writing from SUNY Purchase and an MA in Classical Theatre from Kingston University, London. Margaret
has performed professionally in London, Italy, Scotland, and the USA. Her Chicago area credits include Metropolis’ *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead* (Horatio); JPAC’s *Nevermore* (Muddy); and Citadel Theatre’s *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum* (Gymnasia). Some of her New England credits include *The Pirates of Penzance* (Director) Stowe Theatre Guild; *School for Lies* (Dubois) Waterbury Festival Players; *Oliver!* (Widow Corney) Lyric Theatre Company; *Hamlet* (Rosencrantz) Champlain Theatre; *Sweeney Todd* (Mrs Lovett) Stowe Theatre Guild; and *Secret Garden* (Martha) STG. 

**Catherine Healey‡ (Understudy Margaret and Sexton)** Please see Intern Profile

Noelle Klyce (Ursula) holds an Acting BFA ('18) from University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Her most recent credits include Elsa in *Rising Temperatures: It’s Getting Warmer* (Akvavit Theatre), Alice in *Dear Brutus* (Eclectic Full Contact Theatre), Camilla in *The Winter’s Tale* and Gadshill/Westmoreland in *Henry IV, Part One* (winner of the Best Play Award for the 2018 BroadwayWorld Arkansas Awards) at Arkansas Shakespeare Theatre. She’s also worked with ETA Creative Arts Foundation, Bernard Productions, in the green show for Chicago Shakespeare Theatre in the Parks, and in Season 3 of NBC’s Chicago PD. 1 Corinthians 10:31

Ian Michael Minh (Claudio) is thrilled to join OPFT this summer for one of his favorite shows in the canon. Credits around town include *Vietgone* (Writers Theatre); *Act(s) of God* (Lookinglass Theatre, u/s performed); *Cendrillon* (Lyric Opera of Chicago); *Romeo & Juliet* (Teatro Vista); *The Last Dance, Shadow Boy* (Commedia Beauregard); *Art* (Parlor Room Players); and *Coriolanus* (Commission Theatre). He is an artistic ensemble member with Midsommer Flight and has appeared in the company’s productions of *Hamlet*, *Twelfth Night*, and *As You Like It*. Ian is represented by the angels at Shirley Hamilton Talent and can be found at ianmichaelminh.com.

Rio Ragazzone† (Friar Francis and George Seacol) is delighted to be working with Oak Park Festival Theatre once more. Chicago credits include *Taming of the Shrew, You Can’t Take It With You* (OPFT, u/s); *In the Canyon* (Jackalope Theatre Company, u/s); and *Armonica’s: The Secret Gem of the Southwest Side* (Jackalope Groundworks Series.) Rio holds his Bachelor’s in Theatre Arts from New Mexico State University and is a proud artistic associate of Oak Park Festival Theatre.

Michael Meiners (Understudy Leonato and Don Pedro) is pleased to be making his Oak Park Festival debut. He returns to the professional stage after a fourteen year hiatus, before which Mike played Charley in *Charley’s Aunt* at Timberlake Playhouse, appeared in the motion pictures *The Trouble With Dee Dee* with Kurtwood Smith and *The Break Up* with Vince Vaughn and was a founding member of iO Theater’s *Inside Vladimir* with Amy Poehler and Tina Fey. Mike is a graduate of the Second City Training Center, attended Denison University where he played Danceny in *Les Liaisons Dangereuses*, Stanley in *A Streetcar Named Desire*, Moon in *The Real Inspector Hound* and Tartuffe in *Tartuffe* and graduated from Northwestern University where he played Feste in *Twelfth Night*. 1 Corinthians 10:31

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Meredith Rupp‡ (Understudy Conrade)  
Please see Intern Profile

Peter Sipla (Don Pedro) is thrilled to debut at Oak Park Festival Theatre! He was most recently seen as Rom/Drums in Cambodian Rock Band at Victory Gardens Theatre. Other credits include Phra Alack in The King and I (Lyric Opera of Chicago), Henry in South Pacific (Drury Lane Theatre), Short Shakes!: Romeo and Juliet and Passion (Chicago Shakespeare Theatre), Newsies and City of Angels (The Marriott Theatre), Wizard of Oz and Miss Saigon (Paramount Theatre), and work with TimeLine Theatre, Writers’ Theatre, First Folio Theatre, Porchlight Music Theatre, Skylight Music Theatre, Brightside Theatre, Red Tape Theatre, Steel Beam Theatre, and Disney Cruise Line. Television credits include Hundley in Chicago Fire. Peter has recorded Voiceovers for hundreds of commercials and industrials. @petersipla www.petersipla.com

Joshua Stein‡ (Understudy Balthasar, 1st Watch and Musician) Please see Intern Profile

Timothy Sullivan (Understudy Friar Francis and George Seacol) is excited to work with Oak Park Festival Theatre again. His Chicago credits include Coleman(u/s) in The Lonesome West (AstonRep), Ardarius in Tales from the Arabian Nights (Theatre-Hikes), Peter (u/s) in The Pavilion (Open Door Theater), Lysander and Cobweb in A Midsummer Night’s Dream (Theatre-Hikes), Mrs Who (u/s) and Father (u/s) in A Wrinkle in Time (Lifeline Theater), Mycroft Holmes (u/s) and Stamford (u/s) in Miss Holmes (Lifeline Theater), Arnold Crouch in Not Now, Darling! (Brightside Theatre), Sir Robin in Spamalot (Metropolis), and Kahless Past in A Klingon Christmas Carol (Commedia Beauregard). Regional credits include King Arthur in Camelot! and Andrew Aguecheek in Twelfth Night (Oxford Shakespeare Festival) and Chip in The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee (Red Barn Summer Theatre). He received his BA and BM from Lawrence University and MFA from WIU.

Bret Tuomi* (Don John and Dogberry) is very glad to be making his first appearance on the OPFT stage. Chicago area credits include Julius Caesar, Henry V, Othello, Macbeth, and Nell Gwynn at Chicago Shakespeare Theatre; The Iceman Cometh and Ah, Wilderness! at The Goodman; Drury Lane appearances include West Side Story, Billy Elliot and Saturday Night Fever; and The Odd Couple and Big River at Theatre at the Center. He has also appeared on Broadway and the first national tour of Rock of Ages. Television credits include Mind Games and Chicago PD.

Bryan Wakefield*† (Benedick) is absolutely ecstatic to be returning to Oak Park this season to play with this outstanding cast and crew. Chicago credits include The Fair Maid of the West, Macbeth, Love’s Labours Lost, Twelfth Night, Cyrano de Bergerac (Oak Park Festival Theater), Picasso at the Lapin Agile, Bartleby the Scrivener, Macbeth, Theophilus North (Organic Theater Company), Arms and the Man (ShawChicago), Titus Andronicus, Pericles, Prince of Tyre (Shakespeare Project of Chicago), and others. Bryan became an artistic associate with Oak Park Festival Theatre in 2017, is an actor/combatant with the Society of the American Fight Directors, and an exotic bird handler from
CAST PROFILES CONT.

the California-based Carvalho’s Friends of a Feather. He holds an MFA in Acting from Northern Illinois University and a Certificate of Acting from the Moscow Art Theater School. A special thanks to Steven B.: tabor and the pipe…tabor and the pipe. Got it.

Eunice Woods* (Beatrice) is delighted to be working with Oak Park Festival Theatre for the first time! Chicago credits include The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time, Familiar u/s (Steppenwolf Theatre Company); Father Comes Home From the Wars u/s (Goodman Theatre); Hinter (Steep Theatre); No Blue Memories: The Life of Gwendolyn Brooks (Manual Cinema); Parade u/s (Writers Theatre); 10 Out Of 12 (Theater Wit); Little Shop of Horrors (American Blues Theater); The Project(s) (American Theater Company) and more. Television credits include Shameless and Chicago PD. Eunice is a proud company member of BOM where she performs and teaches in Chicago Public Schools. She is represented by Gray Talent Group. Follow her on Instagram to see what she’s up to: @eunicewoods

PRODUCTION PROFILES

Leigh Barrett*† (Stage Manager) is a proud artistic associate of Oak Park Festival Theatre who has been a director, designer and stage manager in the Chicago area since landing here in 1989. Her other artistic home is Babes With Blades Theatre Company, where she most recently directed The Invisible Scarlet O’Neil, and currently serves as the Associate Artistic Director. Chicago credits include work with Shattered Globe, Bailiwick Repertory, City Lit, Promethean Theatre, The Conspirators, and Plasticine. Next up for Leigh will be sound design for Babes With Blades’ spring production of Othello.
PRODUCTION PROFILES


Tony Dobrowolski*† (Text Coach) An Oak Park resident since 1992, Tony’s relationship with OPFT began with the 1996 production of Hamlet in which he played both Polonius and The First Grave Digger. In 1997, he played Leonato in Much Ado About Nothing. 2001 saw Tony as Baptista (for the first of two times for OPFT) in The Taming of the Shrew and in 2012 he was Lord Stanley in Richard III. In addition to his Austin Gardens appearances, Tony has also performed in the annual OPFT/Prevail holiday benefits of Mrs Coney, and Midwinter's Tale. He performed as a part of OPFT Radio Acting Company in its inaugural performance of Hound of Baskerville and assayed the role of Oscar Wilde (as narrator) in The Picture of Dorian Gray, appeared in Edgar Allan Poe’s Tales of Horror and, last Fall, played Treadwell and Inspector Japp in Black Coffee. He has appeared in four of the Play and a Pint series offerings: The Playboy of the Western World, Deathtrap, Sleuth. A former costume designer and long-time jewelry designer, Tony’s creations have graced numerous OPFT fundraisers. Tony has appeared with The Shakespeare Project of Chicago. Chicago acting credits include productions with First Folio Theatre, Chicago Shakespeare, Court Theatre, Goodman Theatre, Illinois Theatre Center, Marriott Lincolnshire, Northlight, National Jewish Theatre and more than thirty productions with Shaw Chicago. Regional credits include Madison Rep (WI); Boars Head Theatre, Jewish Ensemble Theatre and Meadow Brook Theatre (MI). He is continuing work on his play with music entitled James Whistler, Oscar Wilde and The Artistic Temperament. He has recently begun work on a new piece called My Medical Remedy or You Can’t Make This Sh*t Up. Tony has been a proud member of Actors’ Equity Association since 1989.

Megan Flanery‡ (Assistant Stage Manager) Please see Intern Profile

Jamie Karas (Assistant Director) Please see Intern Profile

Melanie Keller* (Director) is honored to return to OPFT where she previously directed The Amish Project and appeared as Lady Macbeth. She is the Associate Artistic Director of First Folio Theatre where she
has directed All Childish Things, Mary’s Wedding, Silent Sky, and acted in over 10 productions including The Turn of the Screw, The Merchant of Venice and Blithe Spirit. As a member of Signal Ensemble, she directed the Jeff-nominated: The Drowning Girls. Acting credits with Signal include East of Berlin and The Russian Play (Jeff Award for Best Actress), The Weir (Jeff Nomination for Best Supporting Actress), and Much Ado About Nothing. Other directing credits include projects with The Shakespeare Project of Chicago, Irish Theatre of Chicago, Fraud and Phony, WildClaw and Chicago Dramatists. Additional acting credits include productions at Waterfront Playhouse in Key West, Peninsula Players, The Goodman, Northlight, Chicago Shakespeare, Artists’ Ensemble, Strawdog, and seasons at the Stratford Festival of Canada, Lakeside Shakespeare and the Michigan Shakespeare Festival. She has appeared on Chicago Med, Chicago Fire, and Chicago PD, and in the short film UberEx. She is so grateful to the members of OPFT for inviting her to play in their home-in-the-park this summer.

Rachel Lambert (Costume Designer) is delighted to be working with Oak Park Festival Theatre for the first time. Her other Chicago design credits include Santaland Diaries and The King of Hell’s Palace (Goodman Theatre); Twist Your Dickens (The Second City); Mothers and Sons (Northlight Theatre); Puff: Believe It Or Not, Henry IV, The Life of Galileo, and Travesties and Northanger Abbey (Jeff nominations–Remy Bumppo Theatre); Mary’s Wedding, Silent Sky, Cymbeline, Merchant of Venice, and Romeo & Juliet (Jeff nomination); Time Stands Still and The Dingdong (Buffalo Theatre Ensemble); A Swell In The Ground (The Gift); Jesus Hopped the ‘A’ Train, A Perfect Ganesh, Intimate Apparel (Jeff nomination), After the Fall (Eclipse Theatre); Hansel & Gretel, The Merry Widow, Die Fledermaus, Magic Flute, Gianni Schicchi (DePaul School of Music); Rose (Greenhouse Theatre); Next to Normal (BoHo Theatre); My Name Is Annie King (Underscore Theatre); The Drowning Girls (Signal Ensemble); and American Myth (American Blues Theatre). Regionally she has designed for Peninsula Players and the Texas Shakespeare Festival.

Mark Lancaster† (Intimacy & Violence Designer) has been working with OPFT since 2017 when he joined the casts of Macbeth, The Fair Maid of the West, and A Dickens Carol. He also served as the fight/movement director for the 2018 season’s You Can’t Take it With You and The African Company Presents Richard Ill. Mark is a 2012 graduate of the MFA Acting program of The Theatre School at DePaul University, an Advanced Actor Combatant with the Society of American Fight Directors—easy to love, hard to miss, thinks he can write, is damned handsome, and adores his cat.

Gary Nocco (Assistant Costume Designer and Wardrobe Master) is pleased to return for his sixth show with Oak Park Festival Theatre. He is a Chicago-based freelance stylist, costume designer and make-up artist. Film Credit: Every 21 Seconds (Wardrobe Supervisor and Personal Stylist/Make-up Artist/Assistant to lead–Two 9 Productions). Theatrical Design Credits: The Fantasticks (Ogorod Productions), The Next Big Thing (The Factory Theater), Muthaland (Jeff Recommended–16th Street Theater), The Liar (Jeff recommended–Promethean Theatre Ensemble), Eurydice (Promethean Theatre Ensemble), Carroll Gardens (16th Street Theater), Dating & Dragons (The Factory Theater) and The Taming of the Shrew (Oak Park Festival Theatre). His work has been seen at Improv Olympic Chicago and Victory Gardens Biograph Theater.

Merredith Rupp‡ (Assistant Stage Manager) Please see Intern Profile

Nicholas James Schwartz (Scenic Designer) Originally from New York, Nick now resides is Chicago as a scenic designer, scenic artist and production manager. He
has recently been nominated for best Scenic Design by the BTAA for his work on Juneteenth Street at ETA Creative Arts Center and for Harbour Gate at 16th Street Theatre. Nick’s previous works include: Comedy of Errors (Arkansas Shakespeare Theatre), Elephant Man (William Street Repertory), King Lear, Between Riverside and Crazy (Red Twist Theatre), Blood at the Root, Antigone (Elgin Community College), In The Blood, Rounded Heads and Peaked Heads (Red Tape Theatre), Naked (Trapdoor Theatre), Book of Merman, Defacing Michael Jackson (Flying Elephants Productions), Juneteenth Street (ETA Creative arts), Green Book, YPF (Pegasus Theatre Company), Memphis, Young Frankenstein, Memphis (Parkland College), and Revolt (Vision Latino Theatre).

Brian Sprague (Technical Director)
Brian Sprague is a Chicago based freelance theatre artist. He received his Master of Fine Arts in Acting from Northern Illinois University and has studied and performed internationally at the Moscow Art Theatre and Adana State Theatre in Adana, Turkey. Some past technical director credits include: Fun Harmless Warmachine (The New Colony), Warrior Class (Comrades), The Harvest (Griffin Theatre Company), Akeelah and the Bee (Adventure Stage Chicago), JB, Arms and the Man (City Lit Theatre Company), Invisible Hand, Birdland, Earthquakes in London (Steep Theatre), You Can’t Take It With You, Fair Maid of the West, Macbeth, The African Company Presents Richard Ill (Oak Park Festival Theatre), Grace, The Goat: or Who is Sylvia (Interrobang Theatre Project), Happiest Place on Earth, Give It All Back, Truth and Reconciliation and HeLa (Sideshow Theatre Company), Twelfth Night, Much Ado About Nothing (Notre Dame Shakespeare Festival).

Melanie Thompson (Production Manager) is thrilled to work with Oak Park Festival Theatre, and work with such a phenomenal team! Past credits include: His Life Matters (Black Lives, Black Words International Project), That Night (Erasing the Distance), Good Enough (16th Street Theatre Co.), Evil Dead (Black Button Eyes Productions), I Know My Own Heart (Pride Films & Plays), The Lonesome West (AstonRep), Koalas (16th Street Theatre Co.), DocFest 2018: Learning 101 (Erasing the Distance), The Laramie Project (AstonRep), I Can Cook Too: an evening of musical theatre with Krista Hansen (DUPAC). Erasing the Distance: Dominic, Chapter 2 (DUPAC), Shockheaded Peter (Black Button Eyes Productions), The Addams Family (DUPAC), and The Seagull (DUPAC). She thanks her friends, family, and Prince for their love and support.

Megan Turnquist (Lighting Designer) is excited to work with Oak Park Festival Theatre this season. Chicagoland design credits include productions such as Emma!, Elephant Man (Williams Street Rep), Eclipsed (Pegasus Theatre), Veronica’s Room, Amadeus, Myths and Hymns (Promethean Theatre Ensemble), Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead (Wheaton College) Julius Caesar, Antigone, and Mudlark (The Arc Trials). Regional credits include Macbeth, Guys and Dolls (Arkansas Shakespeare Theatre) and an assistantship at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival. Megan holds an MFA in lighting design from Purdue University.

George Zahora† (Original Music/Sound Designer) has been doing sound design in various professional and semi-professional capacities for almost thirty years. He’s also a playwright, IT consultant, DJ and mostly retired music journalist, none of which should matter to you. OPFT audiences have heard his work in last season’s You Can’t Take It With You and The African Company presents Richard Ill, as well as 2017’s Macbeth. He’s also the resident sound designer for the Shakespeare Project of Chicago, where he has created sound and music for more than thirty shows, and in recent years created a lot of music and sound effects for the
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much-missed ShawChicago. He sincerely hopes that you were able to hear EVERY WORD of tonight’s performance. If you had a less-than-ideal experience, please email him at sound@oakparkfestival.com with the pertinent details (i.e. where you were sitting, what was wrong).

PRODUCTION PROFILES CONT.

Robert W. Behr*† (Finance Manager & Park Operations) Since Jack Hickey brought him aboard in 2003, Bob has stage managed 24 productions for OPFT. He has also performed and stage managed for many Chicago area theatres as well as in Toledo, Ohio; Muskegon and Saugatuck, Michigan; and with the opera company of Eastman School of Music. He was last seen on stage in OPFT’s Robyn Hood. He now specializes in finance and bookkeeping for Oak Park Festival Theatre and was the Treasurer from 2007–2012. He is also a freelance director.

Lucy Carr† (Casting Director) has been involved with Oak Park Festival Theatre since 2008. As an actor: Much Ado About Nothing, Midwinter’s Tales, and The Hound of the Baskervilles. Assistant Director: Betrayal, Faith Healer, Richard III and Someone Who’ll Watch Over Me (Jeff Recommended). She has been the Casting Director since 2012. She has cast Beyond the Fringe, Richard III, Someone Who’ll Watch Over Me (Jeff Recommended), Seascape (Jeff Recommended), Amadeus (Jeff Recommended) and Twelfth Night. Lucy has worked with such theatres as Shaw Chicago, Remy Bumppo, Rasaka, Irish Repertory, Lookingglass, Bailiwick, Glass Onion, Absolute Shakespeare, A Reasonable Facsimile, Strangeloop, Spartan, The Poor Theatre, Abbie Hoffman Festival and Kennedy Center (Washington DC) as well as PR Casting, Simon Casting, Grossman Jack Talent and Stewart Talent. She also teaches at Piven...
Theatre Workshop and The Viola Project. Lucy holds a BFA from University of the Arts (Philadelphia), where she was twice nominated for the Kennedy Center ACTF Best Ensemble award, and Gaeity School of Acting (Dublin, Ireland).

Mary Liming† (Box Office Manager) began her career with Oak Park Festival Theatre in 1990 as Administrative Assistant to then Managing Director, Sue Levine-Kelly, and Box Office Manager for the 1990 production of Falstaff. She returned as Box Office Manager in 1992 for Dr. Faustus and has been here ever since. Because of her longevity in this position, she has become an archivist/historian for the company.

Jhenai Mootz† (Managing Director) is honored to have been working with OPFT since 2006 as an actor where she has been seen as Kate in A Dickens Carol, Lady Macduff/Hecate in Macbeth, Kate in The Taming of the Shrew, Osric in Hamlet, Olivia in Twelfth Night, Lady Anne in Richard III, Raina in Arms and the Man, Chrissie in Dancing at Lughnasa, Margaret in Much Ado About Nothing, Christine in Murder by the Book and Madge in Picnic. Other credits around town: Hay Fever, Saint Joan, Man & Superman, Pygmalion, The Widowers’ Houses, The Millionaireess, Mrs. Warren’s Profession, Arms and the Man (ShawChicago), Sparkyl, Jane Eyre, The Moonstone (Lifeline Theatre), The Mystery of Edgar Allen Poe (First Folio Shakespeare Company), The Women and The Philadelphia Story (Circle Theatre). Jhenai holds a B.F.A. from the University of Utah’s Actor Training Program and joined the staff in 2016 as OPFT’s Managing Director. Also a visual artist, Jhenai’s artwork can currently be found in the lobby of the Lifeline Theater & Andersonville Galleria, O’Hare Airport, Northwestern Hospital gift shops and on her website at JhenaiMootz.com

Rae Segbawu (Administrative Assistant) is a graduating senior at Missouri Western State University. They are so happy to be back at OPFT since being an intern in 2017. Rae considers themselves a theater artist and works on every aspect of theater from sound to directing. They are excited to be assisting the glorious Jhenai and all of OPFT in this new administrative adventure. They would like to thank their family and friends for the support and to the company for being a second home.

Barbara Zahora*† (Artistic Director) was asked to join the OPFT staff as Interim Artistic Director in 2018, and at the beginning of this year she became the permanent AD for the company. She directed Elizabeth Rex early this summer, and 2017’s acclaimed Macbeth. As an actor, she’s appeared on our stages as Penny in You Can’t Take It With You, Maggie in Dancing at Lughnasa, and several benefit performances of Belinda Bremner’s Mrs. Coney and Midwinter’s Tales. Additional acting credits include All My Sons and Les Liaisons Dangereuses (American Players Theatre); Hamlet, Heartbreak House, A Little Night Music, and Misalliance (Writers’ Theatre); The Country Girl (Illinois Theatre Center); Marionette Macbeth, The Moliere Comedies, The Taming of the Shrew, As You Like It, Richard II, The School for Scandal, and All’s Well That Ends Well (Chicago Shakespeare Theater); Lady Windermere’s Fan (Northlight Theatre); A Christmas Carol, Wit (Goodman Theatre); Hard Times (Lookingglass Theatre); Arms and the Man, The Devil’s Disciple, Heartbreak House, Major Barbara, Coward in Two Keys, and What Every Woman Knows (ShawChicago); and many appearances with the Shakespeare Project of Chicago, where she served as Associate Artistic Director for eight years. Her other directing credits include Shrewish (Artemisia Theatre); Candida, Hay Fever, Misalliance and Private Lives (ShawChicago); and Ovidian Myths, Something Shaw, and Spoon River: Coming Home for the Chicago College of Performing Arts at Roosevelt University. TV and film credits include Chicago Fire and Operator. Barbara is a visiting assistant professor at
STAFF PROFILES CONT.

Roosevelt University’s Chicago College for the Performing Arts, and she previously taught at Northwestern University’s Bienen School of Music and North Central College. She is represented by Paonessa Talent Agency and is a proud member of Actors’ Equity Association. Love to George, always. Barbara@OakParkFestival.com

INTERN PROFILES

Dakotah Brown (General Internship) will be a senior at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point and will be earning his Bachelor of the Fine Arts with and emphasis in acting. This is Dakotah’s first summer working at OPFT and his debut working in the Chicago theatre scene. His previous credits include Macduff in *Macbeth* and Malcolm in *Student Body* at UWSP.

Lily Chrones (General Internship) is delighted to be joining the intern team this summer after having been inspired by attending OPFT productions during previous summers. Lily is a Junior at Boston Conservatory majoring in Contemporary Theatre. Their previous credits include *Appropriate* (Cassidy), *The Seagull* (Paulina), and *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* (Peaseblossom/Snout). They would like to thank friends, family and mentors who have inspired and encouraged them on their artistic journey.

Megan Flanery (General Internship) This is Megan Flanery’s first summer working at OPFT. She would like to thank everybody who has helped to create this amazing opportunity for her. Megan is a Freshman at Los Medanos College majoring in Theatre Arts. Her previous credits include *Les Misérable* (Props crew), *Twelve Angry Jurors* (Prop Master), *The Drowsy Chaperone* (Prop Master), *Titus Andronicus* (Prop Master), *Living La Vida Loca* (Light Crew), *Connected* (Running crew), and *Bolt Bolton vs. Outer Space* (Assistant Stage Manager).

Leanne Hays (General Internship) This is Leanne’s first summer working in the Chicago area and at OPFT. She is a sophomore at the Chicago College of Performing Arts working towards a B.F.A. in Acting. Her previous credits include *The Wild Party* (Mae), *Inherit the Wind* (Rachel Brown) and *Learned Ladies* (Martine & Lepine).

Catherine Healey (Administrative Internship) is thrilled to join OPFT as an intern for her first summer in Chicago! Catherine is a recent graduate from Connecticut College in New London, Connecticut where she earned her BA degree in Theater. Additional training includes semesters at the Gaiety School of Acting (Dublin, Ireland) and the National Theater Institute (Waterford, CT). Previous credits include Susan in *bobrauschenbergamerica* by Charles Mee (dir. by Kimberly Senior) and *Tour Guide in Information for Foreigners* by Griselda Gambaro (Connecticut College).
Brianna Jones (Administrative Internship) is a senior at the University of Tennessee and is completing both a BA degree in Theatre and a BS degree in Public Administration and Nonprofit Management. Recent university credits include A Doll’s House Part 2 (Nora), By The Way Meet Vera Stark (Lottie McBride), and Eurydice (Big Stone). This is Brianna’s first time working for OPFT and she is excited to learn more about the arts administrative process.

Max Martin (General Internship) currently studies acting at The Neighborhood Playhouse School of the Theatre in New York City. He is thrilled to be spending the summer working with Oak Park Festival Theatre. Max grew up in Naperville, Illinois and he also studied acting last year at Chicago College of Performing Arts. Other Chicago area professional work includes Friedrich in The Sound of Music (BrightSide Theatre in Naperville) and the role of The Caddie in Fairways (The Steel Beam Theatre in St. Charles).

Matthew Rohan (General Internship) will be a sophomore pursuing a BFA in Stage Management at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. In high school, he served as the Stage Manager for the Illinois All-State Company of Big Fish, produced by the Illinois Theatre Association. Previous collegiate credits include Footloose (ASM), Studio Dance I and Extended (ASM), and Marat/Sade (PA). In the coming fall semester, he will serve as the Stage Manager for Songs for a New World and the Production Stage Manager for the Armory Free Theatre.
Much Ado About Nothing

INTERN PROFILES CONT.

Meredith Rupp (General Internship) is thrilled to join Oak Park Festival Theatre for her first summer as an intern. Meredith is a recent graduate of Kenyon College with a degree in Drama with a focus in acting. Some of her previous credits include her senior thesis, Slowgirl (Becky), Crimes of the Heart (Chick), and a staged reading of I'm Revolting (Lucinda) by Gracie Gardner.

Joshua Stein (General Internship) will be a Sophomore at Rider University. He is pursuing a major in Musical Theatre with a minor in Psychology. This is his first summer in Chicago and his first summer working with OPFT and he is thrilled to jump into the vibrant Chicago theatre scene. Previous credits include Jesus Christ Superstar (Jesus), Dogfight (Birdlace), and Billy Elliot (Braithwaite/Older Billy). He is also the founding captain of the Rider Brunks improv team at Rider University.

Sarah Valeika (General Internship) will be a sophomore at Yale University, pursuing a double major in Theater Studies and Psychology. This is Sarah's first summer with OPFT and she is incredibly grateful to have joined this community! Previous credits include The Matchmaker (Dolly Levi), The Glass Menagerie (Laura Wingfield), and A Midsummer Night's Dream (Helena).

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ARTISTIC ASSOCIATES ACTIVITIES

Debo Balogun recently finished Red Rex at Steep Theater in which he is nominated for a Non-Equity Jeff Award.

Leigh Barrett* See Production Team Profile

Erica Bittner* just appeared in OPFT’s spring production of I & You, and in the fall of 2019 will be seen as Virginia Poe in The Madness of Edgar Allan Poe.

Belinda Bremner was delighted to be back in “The Park” this summer playing Tardy in Barbara Zahora’s production of Elizabeth Rex. For OPFT this past year, she has been directing her energies towards creating programs such as her adaptation of Black Coffee for the annual radio show as well as several one woman shows (Dorothy Parker, Molly Ivins, Julia Child) and other presentations (Strong Drink and Even Stronger Women: An Evening In Donegal and other bespoke celebrations) which are offered through OPFT’s on-line auctions.

Aaron Christensen* recently appeared in the public reading of Lived Through This (based on the acclaimed book by Anne K. Ream) at Lit Fest, directed by Ann Filmer. He is also a personal trainer, a certified instructor with the American Women’s Self-Defense Association, and a certified suited self-defense instructor with IMPACT Chicago.

John Crosthwaite is a Working Actor, Teacher, and Fight Choreographer in the San Francisco Bay Area. His latest project The Dark Hunger is currently screening Horror Film Festivals throughout the United States and Canada.

Luke Daigle was last seen in Eclipse Theatre’s production of Natural Affection. He recently shot a national commercial for Balsam Hill and print ads for James Hardie and UCB pharmaceuticals. This year he completed two short films, Obstacle Course and Collide, currently being accepted into film festivals around the country.

Tony Dobrowolski* See Production Team Profiles

August Forman August was just seen in OPFT’s Elizabeth Rex.

Matt Gall most recently co-directed the remount of the World Premiere production of A Dickens Carol in 2018. He is an actor, director, model, and educator based in Chicago.

Jack Hickey* served as Artistic Director of the Oak Park Festival Theatre for 15 years, where he has acted in or directed over 25 productions, Jack now serves as Artistic Director Emeritus, where he helps continue the growth of this extraordinary company. This summer Jack was featured in OPFT’s Jeff Recommended performance of Elizabeth Rex playing Percy Gower. Earlier this year, he played Ralph Trapdoor in The Roaring Girl for the Shakespeare Project of Chicago. Jack is also part of the newly formed Misalliance Repertory Company.

Mark Lancaster See Production Team Profiles

Savanna Rae recently wrapped up a run of Macbeth for the Short Shakespeare program at Chicago Shakespeare Theater.

Rio Ragazzone Please See Cast Profile

Mark Richard* most recently had the bittersweet honor of appearing in Shaw Chicago’s final production, The Doctor’s Dilemma as Sir Ralph Bloomfield Bonington.

Matty Robinson just appeared in OPFT’s spring production of I & You. Want more Matty? Check him out Friday nights at Pimprov as Prince Mida$, doing improv with The Moonsharks, writing and performing sketches with The Martin Luther Kings of Comedy, and performing stand-up around the city. Follow his adventures on instagram: @mattydor11

Kevin Theis* recently wrapped up a run of Macbeth for the Short Shakespeare program at Chicago Shakespeare Theater.
and will be directing Noises Off for Timber Lake Playhouse this summer and The Nerd for Theatre of Western Springs” in the fall.  

Bryan Wakefield* Please See Cast Profile  
George Zahora See Production Team Profiles

MISSION AND CORE VALUES

Oak Park Festival Theatre explores our shared humanity by telling stories that stand the test of time. By looking to our past and re-imagining the familiar, we hold a mirror up to the times in which we live, bringing us all a little closer.

Central to this mission are three important core values:

ROOTED IN SHAKESPEARE  Shakespeare had a genius for telling stories that speak to all of mankind. His work was universal, visceral, and acutely complex. Following his lead, we aim to explore the human condition through stories that stand the test of time, both classic and contemporary.

INCLUSIVE & COLLABORATIVE  From the stage to the boardroom, we strive to represent the world around us by telling stories that are inclusive of all, and by doing so enrich our art, our relationships with each other, our audiences, and our community. By collaborating with community partners, we widen the scope and deepen the impact of our mission within our community and endeavor to cultivate a sense of family and inclusion of all.

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OAK PARK FESTIVAL THEATRE AWARDS

OAK PARK FESTIVAL THEATRE PROUDLY CELEBRATES THE PEOPLE WHO HAVE MADE AN IMMEASURABLE IMPACT TO OUR WORK OVER THE LAST 45 YEARS

Marion Karczmar Award
This award is named after Oak Park Festival Theatre’s founder and commemorates significant contributions to Oak Park Festival Theatre. Recipients have dedicated immense time and continual support to our mission.

Rich Carollo—2006
Ken Trainor—2008
Marion Karzmar—2010

Gary Balling and the Park District of Oak Park—2012
Joyce Porter—2013
Rose Meyer—2019

Arden Award
This award commemorates the significant contributions to the greater Chicago theatre scene. These donors have made it possible through donations, generosity of time and spirit to accomplish new and important initiatives.

Richard Christiansen—2009
Tom Mula—2010

Nancy Clark—2019

Young Performer Award
This award is given to a graduating high school student for service to Oak Park Festival Theatre or the greater arts community in the Oak Park River Forest area.

Alexandria Frish—2011
Ella Gill—2012

Scott Daniel and Jake Shadrake—2013
Linus Engelhardt—2019

SPECIAL LEADERSHIP RECOGNITION

Presented in 2019 to

Galen Gockel

for his initiation and generous support of the Galen Gockel Internship Fund.
Dear Festival Theatre patrons,

Welcome to the Park District of Oak Park’s beautiful Austin Gardens, affectionately referred to by many as Oak Park’s “Secret Garden” due to the woodland plant life and mature tree canopy that shelters this park from the urban life that surrounds it. The Park District of Oak Park is proud to be the host of Festival Theatre in Austin Gardens for the past 45 years. We congratulate their success as the oldest classical outdoor theater in the Midwest. This summer-long activity brings our community together and allows us to celebrate the arts while connecting all of us to nature.

The Park District works diligently to be the leader in sustainability in Oak Park. Over the past 5 years we have made great strides in lessening our impact on the environment. In addition to the opening of the LEED Platinum certified Environmental Education Center nestled here in Austin Gardens, we have also added solar panels to 5 other Park District facilities. Cisterns now repurpose rain water and splash pad water in 4 of our facilities. We invite you to visit the new working bee hives and learn about tea composting at the Oak Park Conservatory. We are exceptionally proud to announce the receipt of a $577,800 grant from the Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation for the Carroll Center Expansion Project. These grant funds will allow the Park District to achieve Passive House Certification and Source Zero Energy Certification for the entire facility.

We all understand the importance of caring for our environment so that we leave our planet better than we found it for future generations. The same is true for our parks. We are asking for your help and cooperation in keeping Austin Gardens clean and safe through our Carry In/Carry Out program. We ask that you simply carry out all waste and recyclables you bring into the park. Basically leave the park the way you found it. The Park District’s Carry In/Carry Out program is in place at all of our parks to reduce waste and encourage the use of reusable containers.

The Park District hopes you enjoy this evening’s performance in the beautiful setting of Austin Gardens.

Sincerely,

Board of Park Commissioners
Park District of Oak Park
OPALGA congratulates the Oak Park Festival Theatre for 45 years of outstanding, inclusive storytelling!

Proud to be 30: Celebrating 30 years!
Join us at our annual Scholarship Gala on October 26 at the Nineteenth Century Club
Make a contribution to our Student Scholarship fund
www.opalga.org

ANNOUNCING OAK PARK FESTIVAL THEATRE’S 46TH SEASON
SEASON 2020
HAY FEVER
BY NOEL COWARD
&
THE TEMPEST
BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE
every week in

WEDNESDAY

JOURNAL

of Oak Park and River Forest

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Best wishes to the
Oak Park
Festival Theatre
The Viola Project

SUMMER 2019, OAK PARK CAMPS

Using the works of William Shakespeare, The Viola Project unites and empowers girls from diverse backgrounds to stand up, advocate for themselves, and demand inclusion.

All camps run from 9 am - 3 pm Mon.-Fri.
REGISTER TODAY!
For more information and registration, please visit violaproject.org or call 773-349-2685

The Viola Project welcomes all youth ages 10-16 who culturally identify as girls and women. Our students are welcomed regardless of their race, class, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or ability.

This program is partially supported by grants from the Chicago Foundation for Women, the Illinois Arts Council Agency through federal funds, and a CityArts Grant from the City of Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs & Special Events.
MAKING THE JOURNEY WITH YOU

When you serve a community, you stand with people. That’s what we’ve been doing for over 75 years. Whether opening a small business, buying a home, or planning the future, we’ve been making the journey with our customers since 1943.

Speer Financial Congratulates

The Oak Park Festival Theatre!
Be a good park patron and help keep our parks clean and safe.

When you attend a Festival Theater performance, simply carry out all the waste and recyclables you bring in. Better yet, bring reusable containers to help make this a waste-free event.

It’s that simple!

PARK DISTRICT of OAK PARK

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Much Ado About Nothing
Conceived in the wake of the 2006 school shootings in the Amish community of Nickel Mines, Pennsylvania, Jessica Dickey's fictional exploration of a real-life tragedy allows us to glimpse into the world of Amish culture and to come to grips with the true limits of compassion and forgiveness.

Praised by The New York Times as “extraordinary,” The Amish Project is a devastating and beautiful one-woman performance that compels us to question the paths we take at the crossroads of grief, rage, and clemency.

OCTOBER 5 & 6 PERFORMED AT DOMINICAN UNIVERSITY

MORE INFO & TICKETS AT OAKPARKFESTIVAL.COM
THE MADNESS OF EDGAR ALLAN POE
A LOVE STORY

By David Rice    Directed by Skyler Schrempp

OCTOBER 25 - NOVEMBER 17

It is 1849, two years after the death of his wife Virginia, and Edgar Allan Poe is haunted — not just by the spectre of his beloved, but also by his own macabre mysteries.

During the course of The Madness of Edgar Allan Poe: A Love Story, Virginia and Edgar guide the audience from room to room through Oak Park's historic Cheney Mansion, taking them from the garrets to the dungeons...and deep into a tortured mind, teetering on the brink of sanity.

Come experience favorites like “The Pit and the Pendulum”, “The Tell-Tale Heart” and “The Masque of the Red Death” as you’ve never heard or seen them before.
William Shakespeare’s

HENRY V

July 10th - August 18th

Directed by Hayley Rice

Starring Diana Coates

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