

Citadel Theatre takes 'As You Like It' outdoors

By **Myrna Petlicki**
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Citadel Theatre Company is taking Shakespeare on the road. You can see the company's production of "As You Like It" at four locations this summer.

Artistic Director Scott Phelps said they are moving the show around "to get the word out in Lake County that Shakespeare's back." He noted that for years Barat College staged Shakespeare on the Green summer productions. The land where the college once stood has been bequeathed to Woodlands Academy. Phelps is hoping that Citadel can create a permanent outdoor performing space there.

The artistic director said he chose "As You Like It" for the company's summer offering because, "I think it's one of the more accessible plays in Shakespeare's canon."

Frank Farrell, who directed "Much Ado About Nothing" for Citadel last year, is directing this year's show. Farrell, who founded Theatre-Hikes, which combines outdoor theater with a walk, noted, "'As You Like It' is the play that started Theatre-Hikes for me. I called it, 'As You Hike It.'"

Farrell said that this play works especially well outdoors because, "Everybody runs into the woods. My assignment was to trim the play to 90 minutes and so I've cut all the scenes that don't take place in the forest."

Farrell is impressed by the amount of music in this play. "There are five or six songs in the text and we're doing all the songs," he said. They may even add additional music.

Lincolnshire native Brian Sheridan plays the romantic lead. "Orlando is the lovesick guy in the play," Sheridan said. "He has been banished from his home." He greatly misses his love Rosalind but unbeknownst to him, she isn't far away.

Katherine Damisch, who lives in Northbrook, plays the object of Orlando's affection. "Rosalind has the quickest wit. She is incredibly sharp," Damisch said, adding, "That comes with a lot of energy."

Damisch particularly enjoys the role because, "She is a strong female character. She takes charge. She has a lot of emotions — both positive and negative."

Because Rosalind's family is in hiding, for most of the play she pretends to be a man. That's why Orlando doesn't realize she is near.

Sheridan acted at Stevenson High School, studied theater at Marquette University, and then performed in theater and film in Los Angeles. He returned to the Chicago area in 2009 and has been devoting full-time to his acting career since January. This is his first outdoor acting experience.

Damisch majored in theater at Denison University and played Hermia last summer in Citadel's production of "A Midsummer Night's Dream," and also performed in an outdoor Shakespeare production in Cambridge, England.

Citadel Theatre Company presents, "As You Like It"

7 p.m. July 23-26 at Brushwood Center at Ryerson, 21850 N. Riverwoods Road, Deerfield

7 p.m. July 30-Aug. 1 at Lake Forest Open Lands, Melody Farm Nature Preserve, 350 N. Waukegan Road, Lake Forest

7 p.m. Aug. 6- 9 at Prairie Crossing Farm, 32400 N. Harris Road, Grayslake

7 p.m. Aug. 13-16 at Grove Cultural Campus, 100 E. Old Mill Road, Lake Forest

\$15

Citadeltheatre.org/shakespeare-returns-lake-county

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