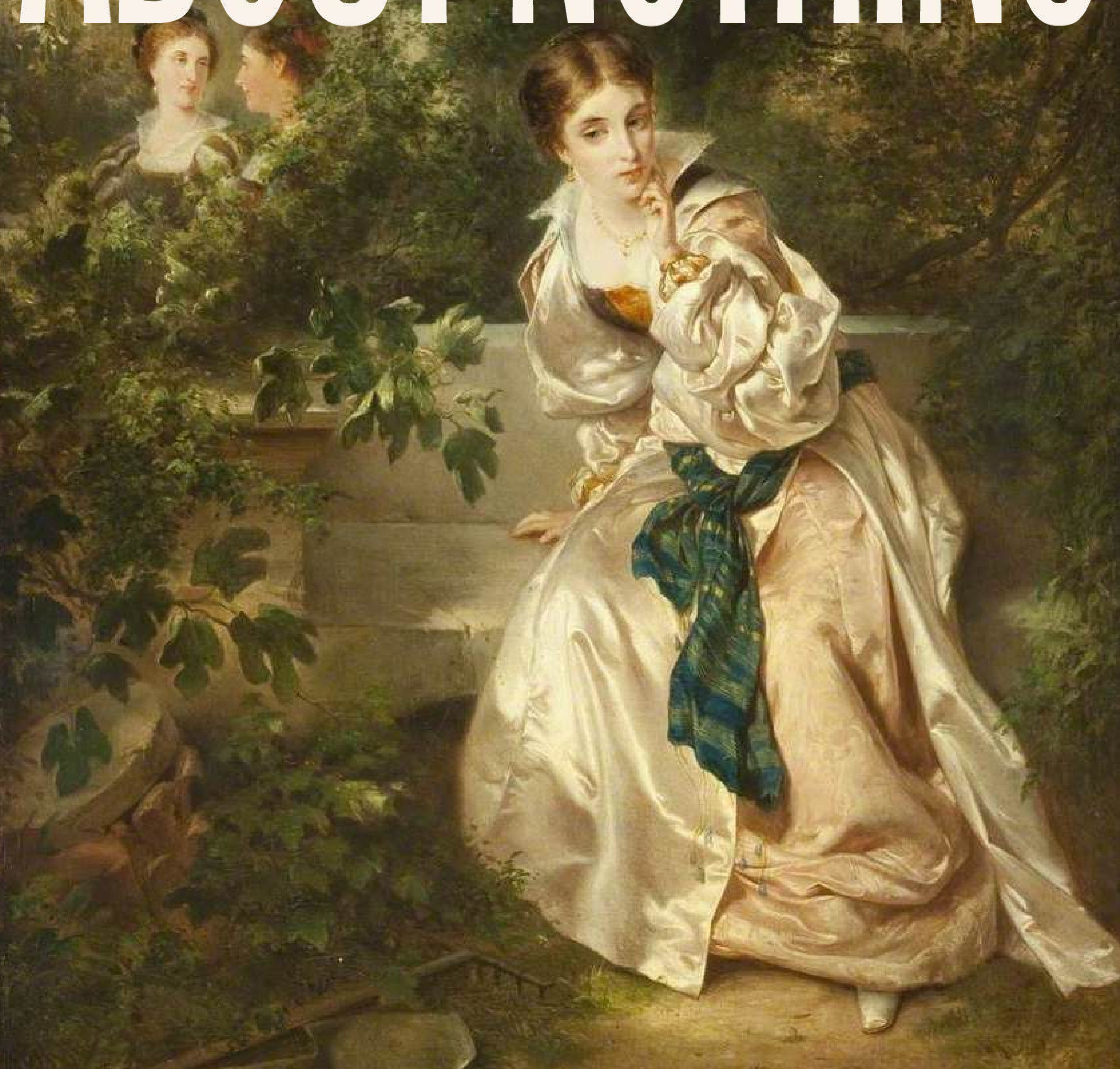


MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING



Creative Team

Director- Michele McNeal

Stage Manager/Musical Director- Alyssa Miller

Technical Director- Joe Soriano

Costume Designer- Sammy Kay Smith

Cast

Beatrice.....Cait McNeal

Benedick.....Joe Soriano

Hero.....Jane Plishka

Claudio.....Austin Vandegrift

Don Pedro.....Alex Young

Don John.....Arunie Lopez

Leonato.....Kathleen Bachtel

Antonio.....Connor Mast

Dogberry.....Sam Ost

Verges.....Tara Corkery

Margaret.....Chloe Misorski

Ursula.....Abby Shoenfelt

Conrade.....Brian Luck

Borachio.....Mario Oscar

Balthasar.....Shannon Thanasiu

Seacoal.....Ximena Castro Ayala

Friar/Sexton.....Alasha Dunn

SHOW INFORMATION

Set in the town of Messina, the play follows the romances of two pairs of contrasting lovers which are either helped or hindered by the "nothing" (meaning gossip, rumor, or overhearing) of various other characters.

The love of young, romantic Hero and Claudio is poisoned by the false accusations of Don John and her minions who manufacture the rumor and evidence of Hero's infidelity.

Witty, cynical Beatrice and Benedick, both of whom have sworn off romance, are tricked into reconsidering each other with an "eye of love" by their friends who mount a clever campaign of deception about each being desprately in love with the other.

Thanks to the efforts of the comic, bumbling members of the town watch, who discover Don John's scheme and arrest two of the schemers, all this "ado" is resolved and the pairs of lovers are finally united.

Director's Note

I have so enjoyed directing this play. I first worked with the script in my early 20s when I enjoyed it's clever witicism. Not only Beatrice and Benedick, but Don Pedro, Claudio, Leonata, Hero, Margaret and Ursula all join in a celebration of quips, puns, and double entendre. When I next worked with the play 36 years later it was the relationships (both explicit and implied or potential) between the characters which most interested me. Especially that between Leonato and Hero (not least because I was playing a female Leonato to my daughter's Hero).

It is my hope that this version of the play allows some healing of that specific relationship, as well as an exploration of the prior relationships between Don Pedro and Don John; between Don Pedro, Benedick and Claudio, and especially between Benedick and Beatrice.

Cait McNeal - Beatrice



Cait has frequently been found in a theater since the age of three when she first started performing. Previous acting credits include: *Richard III* (Queen Margaret/Princess Elizabeth) *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Titania), and *Romeo and Juliet* (Romeo) at Twilight Theatre; *The Game's Afoot* (Daria Chase) at Roving Rogue Pro; *Puffs* (Sally) at Broadview Heights Spotlights; *Equivocation* (Judith), *Hamlet* (Ophelia), *Macbeth* (Lady Macbeth), *Richard III* (Lady Anne), *Tis Pity She's A Whore* (Anabella), at Rubber City Theater; *Sweeney Todd* (Mrs. Lovett) at The Millennial Theatre Project. She has also added the role of Director to her repertoire, directing Roving Rogue Pro's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, The Millennial Theatre Project's *Pride and Prejudice* and Twilight Theatre's *The Tempest*. When not performing on the stage, she is an avid reader & writer, and enjoys storytelling of all kinds. She is forever grateful for the love and support of friends, family, Joe, and her cats. caitmccneal.com @xcrazy_caitx

Joe Soriano - Benedick

Joe Soriano has had the honor of working as a director, actor, combat chirographer, and stage manager throughout Northeast Ohio. He's been involved with countless productions across the Cleveland, Akron, Youngstown, and Canton areas. He graduated from Kent State University where he studied theatre and hospitality management. Some of Joe's previous directorial credits include a LGBTQ+ version of *Romeo & Juliet* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at Twilight Theatre, *Baron of Brown Street* and *Christmas Carol* at Rubber City Theatre, *And Then There Were None*, and *The Crucible* at Avenue Arts.





Jane Plishka - Hero

Jane is delighted to be part of this wonderful cast for her fifth production with Twilight Theatre! Favorite past credits include Miranda (The Tempest), Helena (A Midsummer Night's Dream), Lydia (Pride and Prejudice), and Lady Anne in Twilight Theatre's production of Richard III earlier this summer. Off stage, Jane works as a baker and cook at a small café and loves baking, arts and crafts, and playing board games with friends.

Austin Vandegrift - Claudio

Austin Vandegrift is an Akron native and has been working in theaters across northeast Ohio for many years as an actor, stage combat choreographer, and director. Some of his favorite credits include *Romeo and Juliet* (Paris), *Sense and Sensibility* (John Willoughby/John Dashwood), and *The Outsiders* (Dallas Winston). In his free time, he enjoys reading, gaming, and playing Dungeons and Dragons with his best friends. He would like to thank his family, friends, and girlfriend, Lauren, as well as the amazing cast and creative team behind this beautifully heartfelt piece in our beloved Messina!



Alex Young - Don Pedro

Alex Young is excited to return to Twilight Theatre in its 4th season! Prior to Twilight, he has worked for Chicago State University, Weathervane Playhouse, Ohio Shakespeare Festival, Cleveland Shakespeare Festival, The Hudson Players, and Rubber City Theatre. Memorable acting credits include Scapin (Scapin), A View From the Bridge (Rodolpho), The Great God Brown (Billy Brown), The Bacchae 2012 (Dionysus), A Flea in Her Ear (Homénides de Histangua), The Long Christmas Ride Home (Stephen), As You Like It (Rosalind), Henry IV, Part I (Gadshill), A Midsummer Night's Dream (Demetrius), Passage (H), Everybody (Usher/God/Understanding), The Cottage (Clarke), Into the Breeches! (Stuart), and Richard III (Edward IV/Ratcliffe)





Arunie Lopez - Don John

Arunie Lopez is a British Actress, she graduated from the Oxford School of Drama and has spent her life on stage. Some of her recent productions include, Miss Scarlet in Weathervanes production of Clue, Bianca in Ohio Shakespeare's production of Othello, Georgina in Play on in Aurora and the White Witch in Narnia at the Player's guild. She is soon to star as the female lead, in the film. "I will never Surrender" a World War 2 Docudrama. This is her second production with Twilight. She also played in Richard the 3rd as Clarence. She is thrilled to be working with them again, they are truly one of her favourite theatres. She cannot wait to play the villain Do Jon!

Kathleen Bachtel - Leonata

Kathleen Bachtel is thrilled to take the stage again with her friends at Twilight Theatre! Some of her favorite productions include: Richard III (Queen Elizabeth) and *Romeo & Juliet* (Benvolio) with Twilight Theatre; *Beauty and the Beast* (Mrs. Potts) with The Players Guild Theatre; *Pride & Prejudice* (Mrs. Bennet) with The Millennial Theatre Project; *Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street* (Mrs. Lovett u/s) with Weathervane Playhouse; *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Titania) and *The Mousetrap* (Mollie Ralston) with Roving Rogue Productions.



Sam Ost - Dogberry.

Sam Ost {she/her} (Dogberry) is so excited to be joining the cast of Much Ado for her fourth show with Twilight Theatre. Favorite past productions include last summer's "A Comedy of Errors" (Dromio of Ephesus), "The Tempest" (Trinculo) [Twilight Theatre]; "Same Time, Next Year" (Stage Manager) [Western Reserve Playhouse]; "Love's Labours Lost" (Costard), "Women Beware Women" (Isabella), "Julius Caesar" (Calpurnia/Lucius), "Macbeth" (Asst Director/Donalbain/Murderer) [Rubber City Theatre]; "The Bacchae 2.0" (Asst SM), "The Merchant of Venice" (Asst Director/Messenger); "Scapin" (Hyacinth) [University of Akron].



Tara Corkery - Verges

Tara Corkery (Verges) - she/her - was last on stage as Stephanie in POTUS, and as Mrs. Bennet in Pride and Prejudice. Other selected credits: 9 to 5 (Violet), Working (Kate), Lizzie (Bridget), Silent Sky, Spitfire Grill (Shelby) Falsettos (Trina), Clue (Miss Scarlet), Disaster, Into the Woods (Baker's Wife), Puffs, Ragtime (Mother), Midsummer Night's Dream (Snug/Moth), Next to Normal, Weird Romance, Durang Durang, Cry Havoc (Flo), and John & Jen. She is a Diploma student of Theatrical Intimacy Education, focusing on consent based practices and organizational advocacy and serves on the board at Broadview Heights Spotlights. Thank you to this lovely group of artists for a wonderful experience!

Chloe Misorski - Margaret

Chloe Misorski (she/her) is pro Black, pro brown, pro weed, pro gay, pro choice, pro trans, pro hoe.

Chloe is happy to be spending more of the summer with Twilight Theater. Last seen in Richard III as Lord Stanley, she is thrilled to be returning with her sophomore performance as Margaret. Previously seen in the ensemble for Poe is Dead and Dear Aunt Flow (Starcatcher Theater). Look for her next on the Monodogologue Stage at Micro Theater: Tremont Reloaded in September. Chloe would like to thank Sabra and Alesha Misorski for their love, support, and willingness to do the dishes while she is at rehearsal.



Abby Shoenfelt - Ursula

Abby Shoenfelt is thrilled to be in her second production with Twilight Theater. She has been in things, you may have seen her in them. Thank you to the fambam as always. And of course, huge shout out to the one and only, my Billy Crystal, J Luna.



Connor Mast - Antonio

Conner is ecstatic to be performing here tonight. Recent credits include: Sweeney Todd (Beedle Bamford), All Shook Up (Chad), and Hair (Hooper Bukowski). Connor is originally from Holmes County Ohio and has been performing for ten years. Some of his favorite projects include: The Little Mermaid (King Triton), Cat on a Hot Tin Roof (Brick Pollitt), Shrek The Musical (Shrek) and Beauty and the Beast (Beast). Connor is now a resident of Akron and has worked in the theatre scene for a few years. Some of his credits include Kinky Boots (Angel), Roger and Hammerstein's Cinderella (Ensemble) Pride and Prejudice (Mr. Hill) and Ragtime (Ensemble). Connor would like to thank his girlfriend and family for supporting his craft.

Brian Luck - Conrade

Brian Luck (Conrade) is thrilled to make his Twilight Theatre debut! Favorite acting credits include The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time (Christopher) and The Normal Heart (Tommy) at the College of Wooster and You Can't Take It With You (Ed) at Wayne County Performing Arts Council. Favorite directing credits include Chitty Chitty Bang Bang Jr. and Frozen Jr. at Holmes Center for the Arts and I and You at the College of Wooster. Brian teaches English and Newspaper at Archbishop Hoban High School and is excited to assist the drama club this year.



Mario Ashkar-Jafar - Borachio

Mario Ashkar-Jafar is a Lebanese-American currently teaching tango and Spanish ESL in Cleveland, Ohio. Since moving to Cleveland in 2025, Ashkar-Jafar has landed principal roles in Lorain Community College's Cinderella Confidential, Amira Jackson's 24 Hours at Pittsburgh Playwrights Theater, Green Day's American Idiot at the Akron Civic, and in the original murder mystery musical Killer Competition, also, at the Akron Civic. Stream Mario's newly released 90s cover album on Spotify and Apple music. And, stay up to date on instagram @marioashkarjafar. Fun fact: Mario knows 101 digits of Pi!



Shannon Thanasiu - Balthasar

Shannon (she/her) is appearing in her first play since graduating from The Akron School For the Arts in 2010. She is also an alumna of Miller South School For the Visual and Performing Arts, where she studied drama. She works in Canton, OH as a Children's Library Specialist and lives in Akron, OH. She is grateful to be on stage again with such a lovely cast of kind and talented theatre artists!

Ximena Castro Ayala - Seacoal

Ximena Castro Ayala (SEACOL) is excited to be making her Twilight Theatre debut. She's currently perusing a BFA in Acting at Baldwin Wallace University, some of her recent credits include RENT (Alexi Darling, Olde Towne Hall Theatre), A Funny Thing Happened On The Way To The Forum (Geminae, Baldwin Wallace University), and Obras en Evolución (Elena/Raef, Cleveland Public Theatre). She also did a handful of staged readings this year including one of Much Ado About Nothing (Verges/Ursula, Baldwin Wallace University Drama Club). She's excited to return to this story as someone new and hopes everyone enjoys the show.



Alasha Dunn - Friar/Sexton

Alasha Dunn (she/they) is a multidisciplinary artist, performer, and longtime lover of Shakespeare. This is her first season with Twilight - thanks to the production team for the opportunity!



Michele McNeal - Director

Michele is thrilled to be part of Twilight Theatre's production of Much Ado About Nothing! She directed The Comedy of Errors and A Christmas Carol for Rubber City Theater, and has appeared at various theaters around Northeast Ohio, where some of her favorite roles include Prospero (the Tempest), Lear (Lear), the Nurse (Romeo and Juliet), Katherine (the Taming of the Shrew), Beatrice (Much Ado About Nothing), Goneril (King Lear), Dutchess of York (Richard III), Sonia (Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike), Judge Wargrave (And Then There Were None), Miss Prism (The Importance of Being Earnest), Eulalie Shinn (Music Man), Mrs. Bennet and Lady Catherine (Pride & Prejudice); and finally Puck, Hippolyta, Egeus, Peter Quince, Snout, Snug, and Starvling in A Midsummer Night's Dream. Michele is a retired librarian who now performs on stage, narrates audiobooks, designs and constructs costumes, and works as a standard patient. michelemcneal.com

Alyssa Miller - Stage Manager/ Music Director

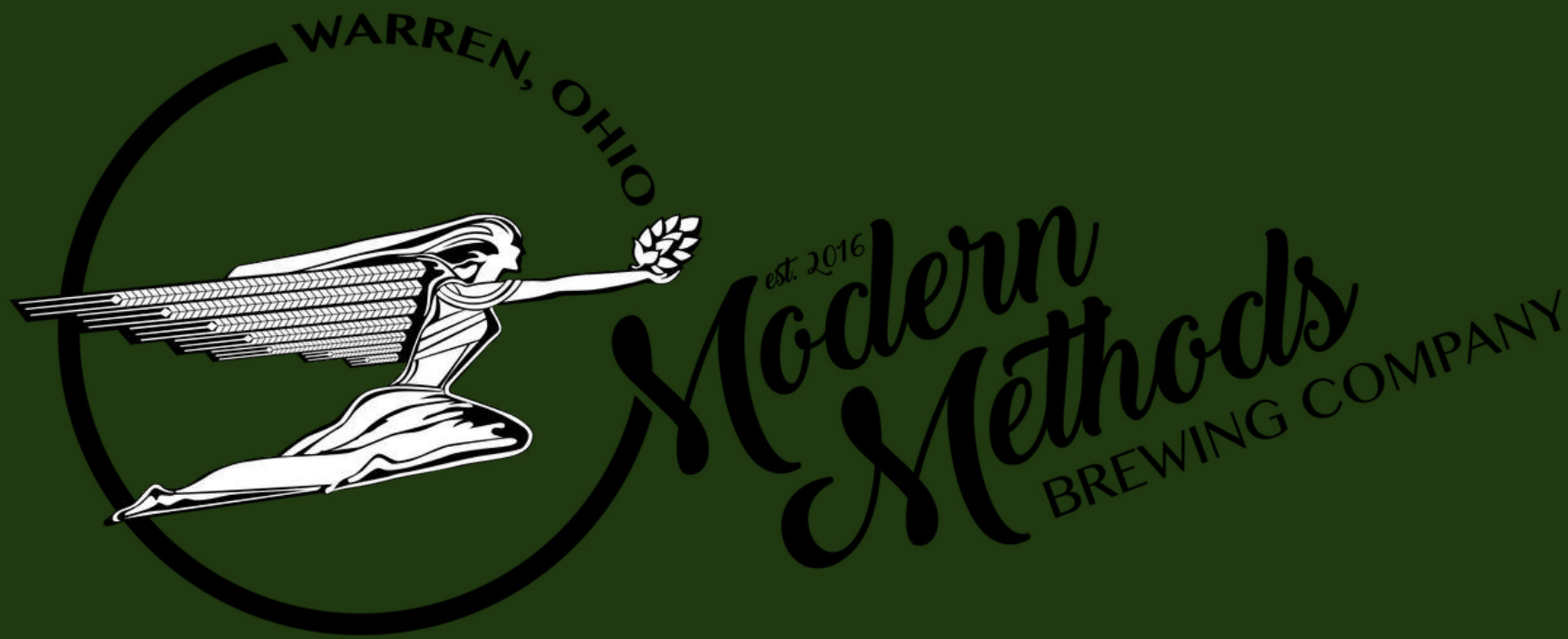
Alyssa Miller (she/her) is excited to make her stage management debut with this production at Twilight Theatre! She was most recently seen as Rivers in Twilight Theatre's production of Richard III. Past performances include Seussical, Bye Bye Birdie, A Thurber Carnival, Anything Goes, and Cinderella. She also enjoys volunteering backstage at the Weathervane Playhouse.



Sammy Kay Smith - Costume Designer

Sammy Kay Smith was secretly raised by Martha Stewart (her mom) and June Clever (her grandma), teaching her sewing and crafting from a young age. Raised with homemade Halloween costumes and dresses for her dolls, it's no wonder she picked up a few things. She's a co-founder of Roving Rogue Productions, and most of her work has been seen with them. Credits include "Sherlock Holmes and the Hound of the Baskervilles," "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde," and "The Game's Afoot." She also has a growing costume closet for Rogue's murder mysteries, friend's to raid for shows and ren faires, and historic interpretations she performs in. Sammy Kay can also be found singing, performing, reading, writing, and cuddling her cats, Bonnie and Clyde.

SPECIAL THANKS



E+E



Jake Reid - Photography