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WaterTowerTheatre
at the Addison Theatre Centre

in collaboration with

 **SMU MEADOWS**
SCHOOL OF THE ARTS

presents

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE'S
AS YOU LIKE IT

directed by

TERRY MARTIN**

scenic design

BRYAN WOFFORD

dramaturge

ROBERT L. NEBLETT

lighting design

LOIS CATANZARO

props design

MARGARET TOOMEY

sound design

SCOTT GUNTHER

original music

DENNIS CAVALIER

costume design

JENNIFER ABLES

stage management

HEIDI SHEN*

Addison!



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WaterTower Theatre is a Constituent of Theatre Communications Group, the national organization for the American theatre..

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about the show

by Robert L. Neblett

A girl wearing pants walks into a forest with a clown...

No, it's not the beginning of an off-color joke or a Benny Hill sketch. It's one of the central images of *As You Like It*, and the punch line involves a bevy of mistaken identities, one sexually confused shepherdess, and a lion. Hmm. Maybe it is a Benny Hill sketch after all.

In Terry Martin's Cajun-flavored reinterpretation of Shakespeare's classic romantic comedy, the primary action of the play has been transported to a bayou in the American South of the 1950s. Which is perhaps most fitting for this veritable gumbo of a play.

Feuding brothers straight out of *King Lear*, a cross-dressing heroine much like that of *Twelfth Night*, and a hopelessly befuddled love triangle that rivals anything in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* are only a few of the disparate elements that come crashing into one another within the borders of Shakespeare's Arden.

Add a dash of cayenne and a Creole band, let simmer for a couple of hours, and you've got yourself one spicy love potion for the stage.

But seriously, folks...

As You Like It is a favorite among audiences, and has been for hundreds of years, but what is its lasting appeal? What is it about this mélange of romance and drama, poetry and prose, slapstick and song, that keeps us captivated and coming back to the theatre for more?

The melancholy Jaques' "ages of man" speech?

The elegant, romantic vision of a grove of trees covered in love poems, leaves dripping with ink poured out from a lover's heart - perhaps one of the most beautiful in all of the Bard's writings?

In the end, it is the transformational power of Arden itself.

No, it is not a magical place of enchantment and fairies, like Oberon's wood or Prospero's island, yet it casts its seductive spell over us nonetheless. Arden possesses a strange alchemy of the heart, which alters all who enter its borders, converting them from their baser selves into something truer, more honest, even transcendent. Its very strangeness draws hidden aspects of our personalities out into the open, where we must confront our sins, our idiosyncrasies, our passions.

Thus, by transplanting the play's action to the alien landscape of a mid-20th century American bayou, Terry Martin magnifies and rarifies the need to strip away the trappings of "civilized" society represented by Duke Frederick's court, that post-war world of sexual repression and rigid social strictures, and find liberation in the buoyancy of a more natural environment where music reigns supreme, poetry can grow on trees, and we are permitted to hope and dream of a better tomorrow of our own fashioning.

There are those who resist this spiritual influence, like confirmed city slicker Touchstone, but they too soon succumb to its pastoral siren song and find themselves bewildered by love in the most surprising (and in the case of the rustic Audrey, amusing) of partners.

It is only once she arrives in Arden, ironically in the guise of a young boy who tutors Orlando in the ways of love, that Rosalind is able to speak her mind honestly for the first time in her life, to unleash the storm of emotions that lay hidden in her heart, to truly be herself.

Ultimately, beyond the poems and songs and tests of true love, *As You Like It* dares to attempt something more far-reaching, something which transforms the very soul. It goes beyond holding "a mirror up to nature," as Hamlet suggests, but instead uses nature itself to reflect its characters' deepest essences in an odyssey of self-discovery.



Orlando	Dan Forsythe
Adam	Gordon Fox
Oliver	Matt Tallman
Dennis	Olubajo Sonubi
Charles	Bryan Pitts
Rosalind	Lydia Mackay*
Celia	Ariel Woodiwiss
Touchstone	Chamblee Ferguson*
Le Beau/Oliver Martext	Thomas Ward*
Duke Frederick/Duke Senior	R Bruce Elliott*
Silvius	Brandon Weinbrenner
Corin	H. Francis Fuselier
Amiens/Musician - Washboard	Alan Pollard
Jaques	Sean Hennigan*
Phebe	Lauren Hayden
William	Karoline Kuss
Lord/Musician - Guitar	Nic McMinn
Lord	Chad Daniel
Musician - Fiddle	Jared Eaton
Musician - Accordion	Mark Abbott
	Bohumil Kniggich



production staff

ACTC Technical Coordinator	Scott Guenther
Technical Director	Kevin Belcher
Assistant Stage Managers	Ryan Glenn, Jon Lynn
Music Director/Composer	Dennis Cavalier
Fight Choreography	Bill Lengfelder
Master Electrician	Leann Ellis
Carpenters	Stephen Cano, John Charon, Justin Knox, Nic McMinn
Scenic Painter	Keila Fairbanks
Welder	Thomas Rose
Light Board Operator	Leann Ellis



* Members of Actors' Equity Association, the union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.



** The Director is a member of the Society of Stage Directors and Choreographers, Inc., an independent national labor union.