The Adventures of Pericles

Thurs-Sun at 7pm
Oxford: July 22-25

Park opens at 6pm, show at 7pm Approx. 80 minutes with no intermission

www.vsfestival.org
presents

The Adventures of Pericles

Directed & Designed by
TOM SIMONETTI

Stage Managed by KRISTEN L. KINGSLEY*
Company Managed by THERESA CARROLL
Production CSO ERIN BENNEDUM

Featuring:
ERIC BERMUDEZ*
ANDIE LERNER*
MATT MANCUSO*
ZAK RISINGER*
KENDALL SEGOVIA*

Lighting by ROBERT PRIMORAC
Tech Directed by ANTHONY SIMONETTI
Costumes by IVY SWINSKI

Additional Crew:
ERIN DALY, MAILE BOOTH, AUDREY BOOTH

Logo & Graphic Design by JOE LANDRY
Sound by HORIZON SOUND
Health and Safety Officer: ERIN BENNEDUM

*Actors appear through the courtesy of Actors’ Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States
I cannot say how excited I am to be presenting the ninth consecutive year of FREE Shakespeare in the Park!

These past sixteen months have been challenging for all of us, especially in the theater community. In the theater it is not only the people on stage and backstage that we care for, but it is you...the audience member or bystander reading this program.

*Pericles, Prince of Tyre* is one of my favorite plays. In the summer when I was 13 years old, I took my big copy of the Complete Works of William Shakespeare that I begged my parents to buy me in the aisles of Costco, and sat in our formal living room (in an effort to be fancy) in a wingback chair and devoured this play in one afternoon.

I don’t know what drew me to it...the strange names? The locales that I did not know about? The characters that Pericles met along the way? Or was it the story itself?

I think because it was an adventure that spans 40 years. You never get bored. Also, as in any adventure, Pericles meets a lot of different colorful characters that play an important part of his life along the way. I don’t think I have to tell you that this would be a running theme in my own life.

The five actors onstage, the crew backstage, our board of directors, and, of course, our loyal supporters, are all people who have been a huge part of my life. I was lucky during 2020 that we were safely able to present our season in the park, with a wonderful production of *Cyrano*.

Last year when creating that show, it was about trying to stay apart from each other for safety. I directed from the back of our rehearsal room, we split up the crew and actors at any time we could. It was challenging, and it was not fun. It was not theater, at least as I knew it.

But, this year our cast and crew is fully vaccinated! And we are now able to start getting back to some sort of normal.

I like to think that, like Pericles, we have gone through a terrible and strange journey together these past few months. And like Pericles’ journey, I like to think we met some fun, quirky characters who became a serious part of our lives along the way: our families with whom we quarantined, the teachers who taught our students from their living rooms to ours, and the entire cast of Netflix’s *Tiger King*. But in the end, after searching and waiting things out we are able to start getting back to wonderful evenings like tonight.

When we toured this play to 4th-8th graders in the Shelton Public School System five years ago, students applauded at the ending. There were even a few sniffles (from teenagers!). We hope the same can happen tonight!

Thank you for your constant support through the pandemic; live theater feeds our souls.

See you at our soon-to-be-announced next event!

Sincerely,

Tom Simonetti
Riddle me this, Prince Pericles
King Antiochus offers his daughter's hand in marriage to any man who can answer a mysterious riddle. Failure to answer the riddle correctly results in the death of the suitor. Pericles - Prince of Tyre - answers the riddle correctly and also realizes that the king is involved in an incestuous love affair with his daughter. Pericles’ success in solving the riddle angers the king, who sends an assassin to kill the young prince. Pericles flees and sets sail for parts unknown.

Pericles Wins a Bride
After a violent sea storm, Pericles washes up in Pentapolis, ruled by King Simonides. He becomes aware that Simonides will offer the hand of his daughter, Thaisa, to the man who wins a jousting tournament. Pericles enters the tournament and wins. He marries Thaisa and she quickly becomes pregnant. Learning of King Antiochus’ death, Pericles decides to sail back to Tyre with Thaisa to reclaim his throne.

Birth and Death at Sea
During another violent sea storm, Thaisa gives birth to a girl but she dies in childbirth. As is tradition, Thaisa’s coffin is buried at sea. Pericles decides to land in Tarsus, fearing that the infant may not make it to Tyre alive. Thaisa’s coffin washes ashore in Ephesus. A doctor revives her and she enters the temple of Diana as a priestess.

Enter the Pirates!
After a year in Tarsus, Pericles decides to return to Tyre, leaving his daughter - now named Marina - under the care of Governor Cleon and his wife, Dionyza. Fourteen years pass. Dionyza has become envious of Marina since she outshines her own daughter. Dionyza hires a murderer to kill Marina. But before the murder occurs, a band of pirates kidnap Marina. They bring her to Mytilene where they sell her into slavery.

Reunited (...and it feels so good!)
As time passes, an Older Pericles sails to Tarsus to reunite with Marina, but Cleon and Dionyza lie and tell him that Marina is dead. Pericles sets sail again and ends up in Mytilene. There, he is reunited with Marina. In a dream, the goddess, Diana, tells the exhausted Pericles to sail to Ephesus so he can go to her temple there to make an offering. At the temple of Diana, Thaisa overhears Pericles’ prayers, recognizes him, and the entire family is reunited.
ERIC BERMUDEZ

Younger Pericles, Leonine, Lysimachus, et/al
(he/him/his) is a New York based actor with a BFA in Acting from Marymount Manhattan College. Past VSF credits: 
Cyrano de Bergerac, Snow White, and The Two Gentlemen of Verona. Other credits include: Harold in Get It Together (The Denver Fringe Festival), Oliver in Quandary in Verse (The LIC One Act Festival: Winner for Best Play and Best Actor), Pasquale in Even If It Gets Us Nowhere (Access Theatre), Tybalt in Starcrossed (FringeNYC, Capital Fringe), Captain Hook in shadowplay: An Immersive Experience (Access Theater). Eric is pumped to be working with Valley Shakespeare Festival once again and bringing live theater back to the community! www.ericbermudez.com @ericbermudezz

ANDIE LERNER

Hesperides, Third Fisherman, Younger Thaisa, Marina, et/al
(she/her/hers) is a New York based actor, director and theater collaborator originally from Denver, Colorado. She is a graduate from Marymount Manhattan College with a BFA in Acting and Directing and a minor in Arts for Communities. She is currently working with The Martin E. Segal Theatre Center as the Associate Producer. You’ve seen Andie on the Valley stage in Merchant of Venice and Snow White. Other acting credits include: The Shoemaker’s Holiday (Classics on the Rocks), Get It Together (Denver Fringe Festival), Even If It Gets Us Nowhere (Social Club Theatre) and Macbeth (Stella Adler Outreach Division and the Department of Corrections). Check out more at www.andielerner.com or @ampersand_ie

MATT MANCUSO

Simonides, Cerimon, Pander, Helicanus, et/al
(he/him/his) is excited to be back with Valley Shakespeare Festival after appearing in Henry VIII (Lord Chamberlain/Cranmer). Other acting credits include; Dessa Rose (Nehemiah) Songs For a New World (Man 2) with Chromolume Theatre Company, Tesla, An Elektrical Spectacle (Anital/Ensemble), Dublin Carol (Mark), Amadeus (Citizen, u/s Venticello #2) and Much Ado About Nothing (Borachio). Aiming to get people to laugh and bring a smile to their faces, Matt writes, directs and acts in the Comedy Fiction Podcast Agents: Declassified. Thank you to VSF for inviting me back and to my family and friends for their support over the last year.

KENDALL SEGOVIA

Second Fisherman, Thaliard, Dionyza, St. Diane, Older Thaisa, Boult, et/al
(she/her/hers) I could not be more thrilled to return to work with the Valley Shakespeare Festival after the world’s most recent production of The Adventures of a Pandemic. It did not receive well reviews. You may have seen her in the past with The Merchant of Venice and Henry VIII, where she portrayed her most favorite role to date, Queen Catherine of Aragon. “For death remembered should be like a mirror who tells us life’s but breath, to trust it error.” - Prince Pericles
ZAK RISINGER
*Older Pericles, Antiochus, Cleon, Bawd, et al*

(he/him/his) is thrilled to be back with Valley Shakespeare Festival! Previously he appeared as Trinculo in *The Tempest* and Antonio/Prince of Morocco in *The Merchant of Venice* with VSF. Zak is no stranger to playing multiple roles in a single production. Some of his favorite roles that came with a “/” or an “et al” include: Carl, et al in the Off-Broadway Production of *Christmas in Hell*; Longaville/Sir Nathaniel in *Love’s Labor’s Lost*; Vertumnus, et al in *Metamorphoses*; The Governor/Innkeeper in *Man of LaMancha*; and Ralph, et al in *Reefer Madness*. He has a B.F.A. in Musical Theatre from the University of Oklahoma and recently completed a M.A. in Museum Studies through a partnership with CUNY and the New-York Historical Society. You can also find Zak teaching yoga and fitness classes at Yogativiti in Shelton while he is in town treading the boards here in CT. Thanks to everyone who braved the heat and made the trip to witness this wacky, lovely adventure in the park. Look Mom, I have multiple personalities!

ZEMI
*Princess of Tharsus*

is no stranger to tempests since she was born on the streets of the tropical island of Puerto Rico where she survived multiple tropical storms and hurricanes. She was rescued in 2020 and now calls the busy streets of NYC home. Zemi is making her theatrical debut and hopes to one day play Bruiser Woods in a gender blind production of *Legally Blonde*. She’d like to thank Erin for keeping her safe backstage, her dog-dad Zak, and all the amazing folks at Animal Light House Rescue who helped to give her a new life in her furever home, making this performance possible. For more info on rescuing a Sato like Zemi or to donate life-saving funds visit www.alrcare.com

KRISTEN L. KINGSLSEY
*Production Stage Manager*

(she/her/hers) is thrilled to be back with VSF as PSM this Summer! She has been involved in Theatre both on and off stage in many different ways for more than 20 years, starting as a young child. During those years, especially learning on the job, she received her training from multiple mentors and supporters. Including, Kelly Burr, Tom Simonetti, and Theresa Carroll for: acting, stage management, set carpentry, and foley artistry, just to name a few. With the help of Valley Shakespeare Festival, Kristen joined the Actor’s Equity Association in 2019. Some of Ms. Kingsley’s recent AEA credits as PSM are *7 Easy Pieces* at Greenwich Theatre Company, *Henry VIII* and *Merchant of Venice* by Valley Shakespeare Festival. This spring she managed a virtual staged reading of a brand new play written by Kelly Burr called *Her Mistress* (Yunksen Productions). Some of Kristen’s favorite acting credits where she was last seen onstage with VSF are: *Charlotte’s Web* (Massaro Community Farm), *Our Town* (Park), *Macbeth* (Tour), *Psycho Beach Party* (Spector Furniture store), and *Twelfth Night* (Park). *The Adventures of Pericles* cast has been a real pleasure and joy to work with, being in the rehearsal space watching the talents and creativity thrive among them has been beautiful to watch. Thanks for letting me be a part of the Adventure! @kingsleyusa22
IVY SWINSKI  
Costume Designer  

TOM SIMONETTI  
Founder & Executive Director  
(he/him/his) is the Founder and Executive Director of Valley Shakespeare Festival in Shelton, Connecticut. He has held the position of Executive Director since 2013 and works as Producing Artistic Director. During the past 9 years, Tom has started programs such as Free Shakespeare in the Park, a touring company that goes into homeless shelters, schools, libraries, and other community centers, and the very popular Shakespeare in the Bar series. Tom has worked in literary departments at theaters across the nation, and has recently become the Director of Drama at Masuk High School in Monroe, CT. Tom is proudly a member of Actor's Equity Association.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE  
Writer  
On Broadway, William Shakespeare’s plays have garnered nine Tony Awards and 71 Tony Nominations and have been performed for countless kings, queens, and various heads of state throughout the world. Previous works include *Hamlet, Julius Caesar, Romeo and Juliet*, and all of the *Henrys*. Mr. Shakespeare is thrilled to be representing a community that loves the arts—The Lower Naugatuck Valley! And yes, contrary to what others may have said, he really did write all those plays. Love to Anne.

ACTORS EQUITY ASSOCIATION (“EQUITY”)  
Founded in 1913, is the U.S. labor union that represents more than 51,000 actors and stage managers. Equity fosters the art of live theatre as an essential component of society and advances the careers of its members by negotiating wages, improving working conditions and providing a wide range of benefits, including health and pension plans. Actors’ Equity is a member of the AFL-CIO and is affiliated with FIA, an international organization of performing arts unions. www.actorsequity.org #EquityWorks

QUARRY WALK is a live, work, play, dine, healthcare community and is proud to host the first Annual Valley Shakespeare Festival on Center Rock Green. Designed as a Village Center Mixed Use District, Quarry Walk provides the perfect backdrop for live performances, charity events and every day living. Haynes Development is committed to “Making People’s Lives Better and the World a Better Place!” We hope you enjoy the performance and welcome you to Quarry Walk...you may just never want to leave.
VALLEY SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL is in its 9th year! Started in 2013 by Shelton native Tom Simonetti, it has presented free performances every year in Shelton’s Veterans Memorial-Riverwalk Park: The Comedy of Errors (2013), Much Ado About Nothing (2014), A Midsummer Night’s Dream (2015), The Taming of the Shrew (2016), Twelfth Night (2017) and Thornton Wilder’s Our Town (2018), Henry VIII (2019) and Edmund Rostand’s Cyrano de Bergerac (2020). In addition to these annual productions, it now offers several more programs, including Shakespeare in the Bar, Shakespeare in the Library, Annual free script-in-hand readings of Charles Dickens’ A Christmas Carol, and a Tour, VSF2U. Valley Shakespeare Festival’s mission is to present theatre that engages and educates its audience members of the Lower-Naugatuck Valley, creating a socially responsible community through classic works. You can find out more about Valley Shakespeare Festival at www.VSFestival.org or by following us on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter (@VSFestival).

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www.vsfestival.org

SPECIAL THANKS
Kathy Ekstrom and her team at the Haynes Group
Janice and Anthony Simonetti
Mary Pagliaro
Elizabeth Simonetti
Daniel, Deborah, Melissa and Joan Simonetti
The City of Shelton
Joan Stokes and the Shelton Public Library Staff
Cyndee Burke, Secretary to the Mayor of Shelton
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Ron Herrick and the Staff of the Shelton Parks and Rec Community Center

...and for those who have been with us from the beginning
...Thank You for allowing the classics into the community.
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GRiffin Health

Griffin Health is pleased to bring Shakespeare to the Valley. Enjoyment of the arts, especially in the beautiful natural environment at Quarry Walk, supports a positive outlook that promotes healing and happiness. These performances by Valley Shakespeare Festival foster a sense of community in the Valley, and are a safe way to celebrate togetherness after staying socially-distant for several months. Griffin Health is proud to support our community’s artists and to help bring the healing power of the arts to everyone in the Valley! Griffin Health - Empowering People, Advancing Care.

To our Anonymous Friends who donated, or anyone who was not included at the time our program was finalized!
We see you, and we Thank You!

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- Griffin Health, Oxford Performances
- Katherine Matthies Foundation

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