

SHAKESPEARE on the LAWN

Event Report
Twelfth Night 2023



About

Iowa Stage Theatre Company transforms Iowa, its citizens, and arts community by producing truthful, relevant, and intimate theatre that inspires, enlightens, and entertains.

Salisbury House Foundation's mission is to preserve, interpret and share the international significance of Salisbury House and its collections as a historic house museum for the educational and cultural benefit while serving as a unique community gathering place.

Our organizations collaborate to produce Shakespeare on the Lawn with the intent to join our missions by providing central Iowa with a unique experience, while also seeking to raise funds for our own respective programming through which we serve our shared community year-round.

As a result of this collaboration, Shakespeare on the Lawn has grown beyond its show run each summer to include additional programs that provide the public further opportunities to learn about, engage with, and enjoy all things Shakespeare.

The following report summarizes the programming of Shakespeare on the Lawn 2023, lists and recognizes those involved, and outlines the year's financial statement.



Play Selection

2023 marked the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare's First Folio, a published volume of 36 Shakespeare plays, 18 of which had never been in print before. Without it, many favorites like *Macbeth*, *As You Like It*, and *Twelfth Night* might have been lost. In celebration of this anniversary, *Twelfth Night* was chosen as the Shakespeare on the Lawn production.

Alongside this, as Brad Dell explained in his director's note to audiences, "*Twelfth Night* invites us to reflect on the fluidity of gender and the spectrum of human sexuality, emphasizing the importance of acceptance, love, self-discovery, and communal harmony." A stark contrast to the previous year's play, *King Lear* - the story of how one foolish king allows his arrogance to rip apart his family and country. The SOTL committee was excited to embrace this juxtaposition given that part of the appeal of Shakespeare's plays is their ability to connect with audiences across genre, tone, and time.



First Reading

Monday, June 5th

Rehearsals began at Salisbury House & Gardens the first week of June, with the cast, crew, committee, and sponsors gathering in the Historic Garage for the first read through. Before the reading began, everyone was afforded time to enjoy food, beverages, and each other's company.

Director and co-producer Brad Dell took the opportunity to explain the text the cast would be working from - the original printing of *Twelfth Night* from Shakespeare's first folio. The play has been edited over the years as spellings have changed and become standardized, but in honor of the anniversary the original printing would serve as the material for this production - "musicke" and all.



Educational Event

Wednesday, June 28th

One of the goal's of SOTL is to make Shakespeare's works more accessible to the public. In years past, these efforts have been solely tied to the production through the use of staging, costuming, and acting. However, after the massive success of the 2022 production and positive response from the audience, the decision was made to expand SOTL's programming beyond its show run. From this decision spawned SOTL's educational event.

Attendees gathered in Salisbury House's Common Room where they were welcomed by local musicians Orckes & Trolles (who some may know from their usual appearance at the Sleepy Hollow Renaissance Faire each fall) and a Renaissance Grazing Table from Tangerine. Local Shakespeare scholar, Shannon Johnson, spoke to the crowd and explained the history of the play *Twelfth Night* and what both of its names are derived from (the alternative title is *What You Will* - or as Shannon explained "anything goes").

After Shannon supplied the history, Brad Dell spoke about the rehearsal process and how the cast was approaching the text. To supplement, Ethan Seiser (Duke Orsino) performed the opening monologue, and Brittney Rebhuhn (Viola/Cesario) and Maggie Schmitt (Lady Olivia) performed a section of Act I Scene V. Brad then engaged the attendees in a discussion of the dialogue from these performances and how it influenced the tone of the scenes and the cast's acting decisions.

After the program, guests had the opportunity to mingle and head into the Great Hall, where a copy of Shakespeare's second folio was on display. The item was loaned (along with some interpretation material) to Salisbury House Foundation from the Salisbury House Library Collection at Grinnell College Libraries just for this event.



**Thank you to our
Educational Event sponsor:
Iles Funeral Homes**

Twelfth Night

Wednesday, July 19th - Sunday, July 23rd

"If Musicke be the food of Love, play on"

As its opening line states plainly, *Twelfth Night* is a play about music and love. Knowing this, co-producers Brad Dell and Keshia Meissner asked prospective cast members at auditions if they played any instruments and/or if they could sing - the role of Feste, specifically, would require this. From there, they were able to build out the band Feste & the Illyrians, who warmed up the crowd and served as an opener of sorts for each night's performance.

The band included Tiffany Flory-Haack (Feste, the Fool) on tambourine and vocals, Joseph Furnald (Antonio) on guitar, Nate Jorgensen (Sir Andrew Aguc cheek) on washboard, Jen Green (Maria) and Giovanni Bahena (Sir Toby Belch) on percussion, and Evan Schettler (Fabian) on trombone.



In the spirit of "Love", cast members greeted attendees as they arrived for the show and thanked them for attending as they left. This was all done in costume but not in character.

The costuming harkens back to the Edwardian era (1901 - 1914), a transitional point in history as England was moving out of the more strict Victorian era and into World War I.

The Edwardian Era is closely tied to the property, and as a result is appropriate for the setting. Below is Maggie Schmitt as Lady Olivia on both sides of Edith Weeks (one of the builders of Salisbury House) on her wedding day in 1907.



As for the staging, the limestone patio served as one half of the stage (Duke Orsino's home) and the eastern portion of the tiered lawn served as the other half of the stage (Lady Olivia's garden). This freed up the western portion of the tiered lawn for picnic/blanket seating. As usual, risers were available on the south terrace for sponsor and accessible seating, with lawn chairs available behind the blanket seating and down in the garden.

The seats in the last few rows of the garden have historically had a difficult time viewing all the action, and so this year risers were added to counteract this. It was quickly realized that these were now some of the best seats in the house, and so the risers will be brought back in 2024.



A concessions stand was set up west of the house with a small assortment of snacks and beverages available. Highlights included selections from Decorah-based brewer Toppling Goliath and Jefferson County Ciderworks, as well as homemade ice cream from Wild Whim Ice Cream Shoppe given to anyone who made a minimum \$5 donation to Shakespeare on the Lawn. The flavors were inspired by this year's play and had clever names such as The Fool's Float and Olivia's Wedding Cake.



Finally, 2023 saw a new venture for SOTL: merchandise. As an experiment, SOTL themed koozies were commissioned and sold at the concessions stand. These items sold well, and have led to conversations about the addition of select pieces of merchandise.



Attendance

Wednesday	367
Thursday	364
Friday	375
Saturday	365
Sunday	341
Total	1,812



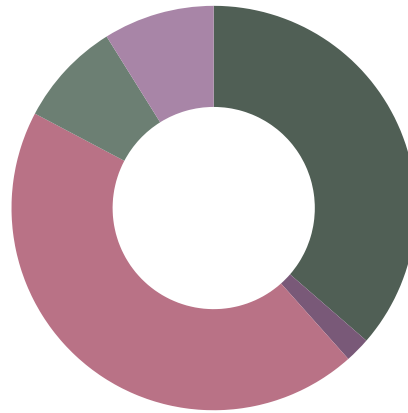
Financial Report

This year's total funds raised was \$75,173.48.

\$10,173.48 remain in the SOTL account. This money has been set aside to cover the cost of a SOTL branding guide and SOTL website. Iowa Stage Theatre Company and Salisbury House Foundation split the remaining amount as fundraising income, taking home \$32,500 each.

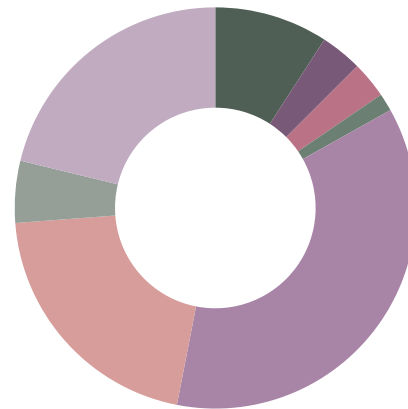
Income

Sponsorships	45,500.00
Educational Event	2,535.00
Ticket Sales	55,430.00
Concessions	10,482.00
Donations & Other	11,112.21
Total Income	125,059.21



Expenses

Food & Beverage	4,565.35
Educational Event	1,673.49
Marketing & Promo	1,471.88
Printing & Postage	713.82
Cast & Crew	18,050.00
Sound & Lighting	10,343.00
Merchant & Card Fees	2,487.44
General Expenses	10,580.75
Total Expenses	49,885.73



Recognition

Queen Sponsor

Craig & Betty Miller

Duke Sponsor

Nancy Main

Earl Sponsor

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Knight Sponsors

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Harry Bookey & Pamela Bass-Bookey

Suzanne Dittmer & Bonnie Hodson

Trudy Hurd

Jackie & Bill Romp

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Healy Burnham

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Christopher & Lisa Davis

Amanda & Patrick Dolan

Sarah Ekstrand

Faith Elder

Lisa Fleming

Kristine Flynn

Sarah Garst

Donors Continued

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Crystal Lehman
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Benjamin Mayer
Carol & Greg Millar
Carol Phillips
Yev Pusin
Clark Smith
Jeanie & Bill Smith
Wynn Walters
Ron & Tammy Watson
Roni Wilson
Art & Sue Wittmack
Arnulfo Ybarra

Volunteers

Geir Anderson
George Belken
Carole & Charles Betts
Dick Daswick
Johnna Davis
Nataliya Deduchenko
Beverly Ellis
Elizabeth & Ted Erickson
Tami Fetters
Darcy Godfrey
Susan Hicks
Amelia Holter
Rita Holter
Shannon & Timothy Johnson
Donna Larson
Jeff Mason
Lisa McVay
Mark Monroe
Wendy Nelson
Kathy Polson
Jackie & Bill Romp
Benjamin & Julia Spera
Danika Stadlander
Joann Tucker
Nancy Vaught
Rebecca Wawak
Nancy Wells
Ron Wheeler
Art & Sue Wittmack

SOTL 2023 Committee

Brad Dell
Chair, Department of Music
and Theater
Iowa State University

Beth Laing
Office Administrator
Salisbury House Foundation

Jeff Mason
VP, Board of Directors
Iowa Stage Theatre Company

Keshia Meissner
Executive Director
Salisbury House Foundation

Craig Miller
Member, Board of Directors
Iowa Stage Theatre Company

Taylor Northness
Museum Manager
Salisbury House Foundation

Donna Scarfe
Artist Company Manager
Iowa Stage Theatre Company

Alex Struelens
Facilities & Projects Manager
Salisbury House Foundation

Paulette Wheeler
Business Manager
Iowa Stage Theatre Company

John Wild
Treasurer, Board of Directors
Iowa Stage Theatre Company

Art Wittmack
President
Taxpayers Association of Central
Iowa



Twelfth Night Cast

Ethan Seiser
Duke Orsino

Aditya Iyengar
Valentine

Brittany Rebhuhn
Viola/Cesario

Paul Miller
Sea Captain & Priest

Giovanni Bahena
Sir Toby Belch

Jen Green
Maria

Nate Jorgensen
Sir Andrew Agucheeck

Tiffany Flory-Haack
Feste, the Fool

Maggie Schmitt
Lady Olivia

Sean Canuso
Malvolio

Billy Thompson
Sebastian

Joseph Furnald
Antonio

Evan Schettler
Fabian



Twelfth Night Crew

Brad Dell
Director & Co-Producer

Keshia Meissner
Co-Producer

Taylor Millar
Associate Director

Katrina Colahan
Stage Manager

Mónica Toro Lebrón
Assistant Stage Manager

Emily Ganfied
Costume Designer

Todd Warming
Sound Designer

Colin Kiernan
Co-Lighting Designer

Dakota Sommer
Co-Lighting Designer

Kevin Barron
Lighting & Scenic Assistant

Dane Singer
Run Crew

Lauren Dursky
Production Manager



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on the LAWN

July 17-21, 2024

A Midsummer Night's Dream