

Up Close & Personal

LOOK FOR UP CLOSE & PERSONAL EVERY WEEK. WE'LL SPOTLIGHT YOUR FRIENDS, NEIGHBORS AND CO-WORKERS AND HOW THEY'RE CONTRIBUTING TO LIFE IN THE 570.

Beauty of Shakespeare ...

Theater has always been, and always will be, a part of life for Marie Casey Philbin, of Scranton, and Camille Reinecke, of Dunmore. The two enjoyed being part of the cast of the first Scranton Shakespeare Festival at Nay Aug Park last year and they say they're honored to join the festival again this year, which runs from June 27 to 30. This year's production of *Comedy of Errors* will bring a new interpretation to the Shakespearean classic filled with themes of mistaken identity and comedic twists and turns. We caught up with Philbin, who portrays Loose, the Saucy Maid, and Reinecke, who plays the Courtesan, in between rehearsals at The University of Scranton to talk about the festival that's growing into a beloved tradition in the Electric City. Meet Marie Casey Philbin and Camille Reinecke...

Let's talk about this show. For people who haven't been to the festival, what's the experience like?

CR: For this production, you can expect a colorful, wild, interactive experience. It's very amplified and energetic.

MP: I think sometimes when people hear "Shakespeare," they might not picture what we're going to give them. It's a very physical play and it will definitely be shocking — in a good way.

How is this production different from a typical Shakespearean experience?

MP: We definitely give it a whole new flair.

The costumes alone make it unique.

CR: The costumes are very colorful and eccentric and quirky. Both of our characters are all about their sexual appeal. If you saw our costumes out of context, you wouldn't think we were about to perform Shakespeare, and I think that's what's so interesting about it.

MP: This show revitalizes something that's a classic. We are truly so lucky to be part of this for a second year. We've learned so much. I could listen to Rosey (director Hay) talk about Shakespeare forever. She's brilliant.

What are the challenges of working outdoors and doing an inter-

pretation of classic material has so many twists and turns?

MP: When we act outdoors, it's so important to reach the audience. You need to be SO big. Not only do you need to be vocally big, but physically big. It's amazing how much that helps in telling the stories of Shakespeare.

CR: There's so much teamwork involved in storytelling that we need to all be on the same page the entire time and focus our energies on giving the story to the audience. And we'll be receiving energy from them, too.

MP: With Shakespeare, and especially in such a large area, you need to be specific with what you're saying and what you're doing because you don't want it to get lost in translation.

What role does the audience play in a production like this?

CR: Playing off of the audience and really feeling their energy motivates me so much and I think it motivates anybody performing in front of a live audience.

MP: When you hear that first laugh or see that first reaction, it drives you.

CR: After rehearsing in front of an empty field, the first performance is always so rewarding.

MP: People are looking at you!

CR: And laughing at your jokes! So it's really an exciting thing. And it will still be



Marie Casey Philbin

Camille Reinecke

PHOTO BY TOM BONOMO

daylight when we're performing . . . when you perform in a theater, it's so dark, it's almost as if you're performing to just a fourth wall, as we're taught. But when you have a live audience in front of you and they're sitting on the grass and they're actively listening and you can see them, it's really exciting. It's energizing.

How did the experience of performing *Midsummer Night's Dream* last year help?

MP: We learned that Rosey Hay is incredible and Rudy Caporaso is so inspiring and Michael Bradshaw Flynn is an incredible example of a professional actor. Coming back, we knew we were in good hands.

CR: And we talked about Michael before — he's very close to us in age. I was a freshman at The University of Scranton when he was a senior and it's so cool to be working with him now. He's someone I look up to. This whole festival was his idea. I just hope that in a couple years when I'm his age that I'm doing something just as fantastic.

MP: He had a dream and he followed through with it. Especially in this day and age with the lack of funding for the arts, I think people are very discouraged. It's hard when you're an artist or even a student studying art and it's so important not to give up on the arts.

CR: And the beautiful thing about this particular production and the Scranton Shakespeare Festival in general is that it's truly a gift to the community. It's free.

MP: And it's in a natural setting.

Perfect for this type of material.

CR: Nay Aug Park is such a beautiful park, and this is a nice event for everyone. Shakespeare was written for all types of people.

MP: As Rosey has said — she put it so beautifully — Shakespeare never judged people. He just gave facts. He told you who that person was with no judgment. And the theater is for everybody. Everyone deserves something beautiful, and this is going to be beautiful.

— julie imel

The Scranton Shakespeare Festival presents William Shakespeare's *Comedy of Errors*, directed by Rosey Hay, June 27 through 30 at Nay Aug Park, 400 Arthur Ave., Scranton. Shows start at 6 p.m. There is no charge for admission. Blankets, chairs and picnic dinners are welcome. In addition to Philbin and Reinecke, be sure to look for local actors Conor McGuigan and Michael Bradshaw Flynn in the show. For more information, "Like" Scranton Shakespeare Festival on Facebook, visit www.scrantonshakespearefestival.org or call 614-3313.