

BYU DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE AND MEDIA ARTS  
YOUNG COMPANY

## TWELFTH NIGHT



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# A NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR

## When in the world is *Twelfth Night*?

One of the fundamental things that a theatre director must decide, in collaboration with the entire creative team, is when and where to set the play. Some plays come with very specific directions for settings, which are so embedded in the script itself that it is difficult to change them without weakening the integrity of the play—*West Side Story* comes to mind. The cultural specificity of the Sharks and Jets, the references to New York and America, and the extensive use of 1950s vernacular make it nearly impossible to move the time and place of the play. For other productions, the setting is dictated by the playwright and is protected by copyright law. The works of Samuel Beckett or Bob Fosse, for example, must be produced exactly as written. However, even in the most narrowly restricted script, there is always room for creative interpretation. *West Side Story* may be best set in the 1950s New York, but the way that New York is articulated—the shapes, outlines, attention to detail, and other considerations can radically shift the aesthetic of the production. Even when Beckett proscribes that the set of *Waiting for Godot* must be: “A country road. A tree. Evening,” the creative team can make decisions about what kind of road, the shape of the tree, the time of evening, and more.

In the case of Shakespeare productions, there is infinitely more freedom to imagine new settings. In his own day, the productions were all “set” in Elizabethan England, no matter when and where the play was taking place. Additional clues for the world of the play are embedded in the script, but there are very few stage directions to follow. Additionally, the works of Shakespeare have long been in the public domain, which means copyright law doesn’t require certain necessities of the production team. *Twelfth Night*, a most beloved comedy, has been therefore set in a wide variety of different times and places since its first recorded performance in 1602. It’s been set in Northern Central Europe in the late nineteenth century, in 1920s America, on an island that invoked Sri Lanka, in faithful renaissance recreations, in a forced perspective picture box that borrowed time periods across centuries, in a snow-covered cemetery of the turn-of-the-twentieth-century, in a very contemporary pop-art inspired world, and in a stripped-down timeless world that erased the boundaries between actors and audience.

In the case of this production of *Twelfth Night*, I was inspired to think about one of the most famous scenes of the play, when Malvolio enters to woo Olivia, wearing cross-gartered yellow stockings. I tried to imagine various ways that this might be interpreted. What kept coming back to my mind was an image of Malvolio wearing bright-yellow chaps, swaggering onstage, spurs jingling. From this initial image, I went to the script to see if a “wild west” setting would support the story of the script. The more closely I read, the more it became clear that setting Illyria as a small, frontier ranching town would not only support the story, but enhance it.

The “wild west,” however is as imaginary a place as Shakespeare’s Illyria. Historian Richard Slotkin argues that the American frontier was a real geography “defined less by maps and surveys than by myths and illusion, projective fantasies, wild anticipations, and extravagant expectations” (*The Fatal Environment: The Myth of The Frontier in the Age of Industrialization*, 11). What we think of as the “wild west” is drawn as much from television and Hollywood of the 1950s as it is in any historical reality of the late-nineteenth-century American west. In our production, we decided to foreground this imagined world by presenting our 2016 Shakespeare’s *Twelfth Night* via a 1950s vision of the nineteenth-century west. We hope to take you back to this time that never existed. We believe this is a fitting tribute to Shakespeare’s topsy-turvy homage to a world where anything can happen. Yeehaw. —Megan Sanborn Jones

BYU COLLEGE OF FINE ARTS AND COMMUNICATIONS  
DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE AND MEDIA ARTS  
YOUNG COMPANY

## TWELFTH NIGHT

WRITTEN BY

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

DIRECTOR

MEGAN SANBORN JONES

ADAPTED BY

RICK CURTISS

YOUNG COMPANY PRODUCER

JULIA ASHWORTH

YOUNG COMPANY MANAGING DIRECTOR

BECKY WALLIN

PRODUCTION STAGE MANAGER

DAYNE JOYNER

SCENIC DESIGNER

RORY SCANLON

COSTUME DESIGNER

ALYSSA BYBEE

MAKEUP DESIGNER

SARAH STEWART

PROPS DESIGNER

SCOTT JACKSON

PRODUCTION MANAGER

JENNIFER REED

DRAMATURG

CHRISTIAN RIBOLDI

DRAMATURG SUPERVISOR

JANINE SOBECK

CHOREOGRAPHER

AMANDA WELCH

ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGERS

FRANNY GLEAVE

KARLEE SAVAGE

Feb 3-5, 10-12, 7:00 p.m.  
Feb 6, 13, 2:00 p.m. and 4:00 p.m.  
NELKE THEATRE, HARRIS FINE ARTS CENTER

Please silence all mobile phones and electronic devices. Photography, video and/or audio recording, and texting are forbidden during the performance.



## CAST LIST

In order of appearance

**Viola/Cesario**

Sherry Kopischke

**Sebastian**

Andrew Smith

**Feste, a clown**

Cameron Bridston

**Olivia**

Savanah Smith

**Duke Orsino**

Scott Jackson

**Malvolio**

Costner Henson

**Maria**

Olivia Ockey

**Sir Toby Belch**

Jacob Baird

Special thanks to Erin Ellis for her lovely work creating the character of Viola.

## MEET THE CAST

Jacob Baird

**Sir Toby Belch**

From Westerville, OH. Junior in the acting program. Performed as the Young Shepherd in *A Winter's Tale* at BYU, and also as an ensemble member in the 2014 award winning production of *Our Town* at BYU.

Cameron Bridston

**Feste**

Cameron has been performing from a very young age. He has been playing trombone since he was twelve, and has been singing since even earlier. When he isn't onstage with the Young Company, he is either writing music, recording music, or performing his over the top original music for any crowd that will hear him. Notable roles include a lamb in a production of the *Christmas Story*, and the Bill of Rights in his Elementary School performance of *The American Revolution Musical*.

Costner Henson

**Malvolio**

From American Fork, UT and Thousand Oaks, CA. Senior in theatre arts studies, directing emphasis. This is his first role since returning from his mission in Seattle, WA. Previous roles include Grumio in *Taming of the Shrew*, Stranger in *The Monster of Dr. Frankenstein*, and Trogg in an adaptation of *Bang Bang, You're Dead*, all at BYU. He is so excited to be a part of another BYU production!

Scott Jackson

**Duke Orsino**

Scott studies marketing in the Marriott School. Before transferring to BYU, he studied dual drama/English and education degrees at Queen's University, Canada. At BYU, he manages the Prop shop and has designed the props for many department shows since fall 2014 (including this one). Onstage he has performed as Melchizedek in a mask-club adaption of *The Alchemist* (fall 2014) and danced in two *Christmas Around the World* productions. He has enjoyed this wonderful opportunity.

Sherry Kopischke

**Viola**

From Vancouver, Washington. Senior in theater arts studies with a minor in nonprofit management. Last seen as Liana in the BYU adaption of *Princess Academy*. Upon her return from the Alpine German-Speaking Mission, she met her husband and they have been happily married since August.

Olivia Ockey

**Maria**

From Lindon, UT. Freshman in theatre education. Favorite roles include Kupava in *Snegurochka* at BYU, Ballet Girl in *Elephant's Graveyard* at Pleasant Grove High School, and Ophelia in *Hamlet* at Pleasant Grove High School. She received regional 1st place in Dramatic Monologues from the Utah High School Activities Association two years in row. Olivia loves Shakespeare and is thrilled to be a part of this production.



## MEET THE CAST (CONT)

Andrew Smith  
Sebastian

A transfer student from the University of Alaska Anchorage; Andrew is studying theatre education. After receiving certification from the Leadership Education Mentoring Institute Andrew taught after-school Shakespeare classes for several years. His favorite acting credits include himself in the *Complete Works of William Shakespeare (Abridged)* at Shakespeare: Alaska, Mr. Bingley in *Pride and Prejudice* at the Alaska Fine Arts Academy, and a troupe member in the 2016 *Microburst Theatre Festival* at BYU.

Savanah Smith  
Olivia

From American Fork, Utah. Senior in the BFA acting program. Last semester she played Hypatia in *Misalliance* here at BYU. She loves Shakespeare, and has enjoyed watching this show come to life!

