



THESNAPPER.MILLERSVILLE.EDU

FOR MILLERSVILLE. BY MILLERSVILLE. SINCE 1925

HOME

NEWS

OPINION

FEATURES

ARTS & CULTURE

SPORTS

ENTERPRISE

MULTIMEDIA

ABOUT

STAFF

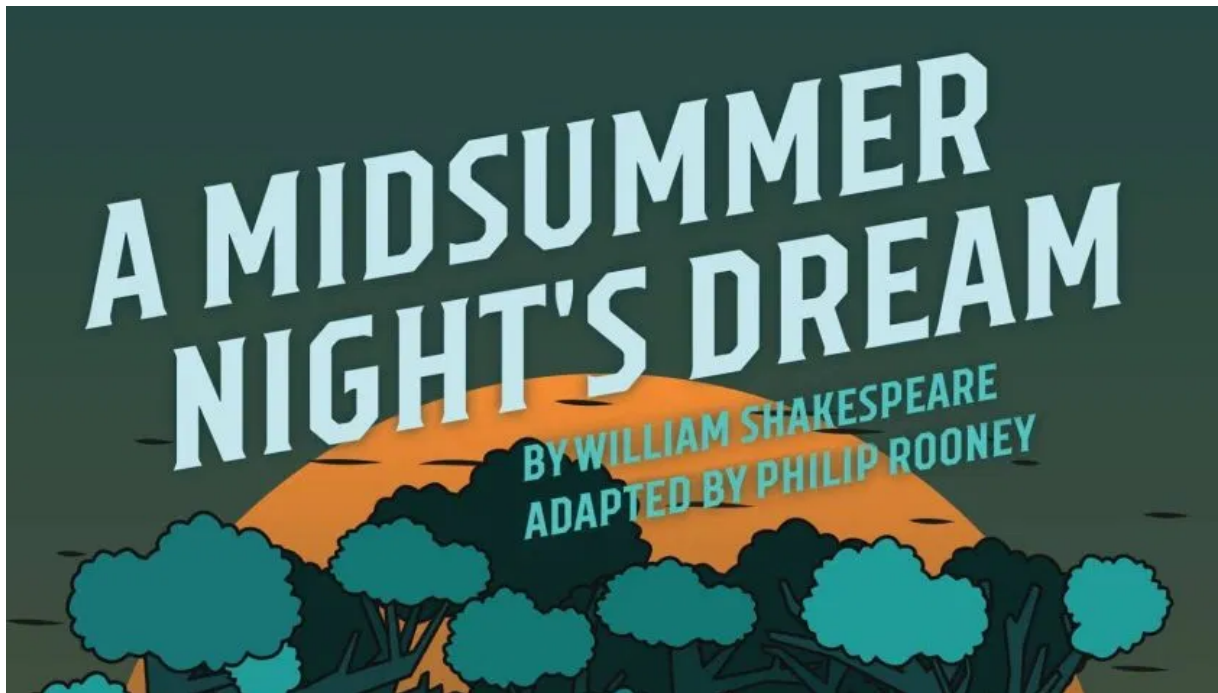
SEARCH ...

[Home](#) > [Arts & Culture](#) > Millersville Theatre brings innovation and diversity

FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK
AND TWITTER FOR THE
LATEST UPDATES:

Millersville Theatre brings innovation and diversity

🕒 September 11, 2019 📁 Arts & Culture



Millersville begins their exciting new theatre season. (Photo Courtesy of Millersville University Theatre).

Josh Rittberg

Arts and Culture Editor

Millersville University has had a longstanding tradition of diversity and inclusion throughout the campus. This mission extends to the theatre department brighter than ever before.

Millersville begins its theatre season with a production of the Shakespeare classic, "A Midsummer Night's Dream." This specific production is an updated adaption by a Millersville alum, Phillip Rooney. This production as directed by MU theatre professor, Adam Boyer is set in the Louisiana



The Snapper
1,631 likes



1 friend likes this



Follow @TheSnapperMU

1,023 followers

CONTACT THE SNAPPER

Print Editions

About

Staff

Contact Us

Apply

Submit Story Ideas

Letter to the Editor

Advertise

ARCHIVES

Bayou around the 1790s. The production is a combination of the old and the new, as the more updated text by Rooney contrasts with the traditional pentameter of Shakespeare. To add to the university's mission of a diverse campus, Boyer is employing non-gender specific casting to challenge the actors and creative team, and to give the production and creative process an inclusive and slightly experimental edge. This season's diverse content also extends to the Dungeons and Dragons themed spring play, "She Kills Monsters," and the brand new student run Entertainment 42 shows which will showcase music, comedy, and even a game show to give students and audiences artistic experiences that are truly one of a kind. This season is one of much experimentation and innovation, with more hands-on student opportunities through Entertainment 42 and fresh forms of theatre which brings excitement and theatrical thrills.

With "Midsummer," Boyer wants to make a show and experience that is equally as challenging and exciting for the students and audience. Even by challenging gender norms with casting, it causes audience members to step out of their comfort zone, and maybe even open their minds to the spectrum of gender and the transformative power of theatre. This inclusion even extended to the production's audition process, that Boyer said "was extremely diverse and inclusive". He said that he saw "representation from all sorts of backgrounds and majors." With inclusion coming as early as auditions, it sets the tone for a communal experience not just for the audience but all involved with the production.

Select Month ▼

META

[Log in](#)

[Entries RSS](#)

[Comments RSS](#)

[WordPress.org](#)

By adapting this piece to a more “Americana” setting, Rooney also makes a show and production that speaks to our contemporary society. With “the mechanicals” or commonplace people, the language is updated to a modern vernacular that students will understand and recognize. With the upper middle class characters, which are the people of royalty in the piece, they have slightly elevated language that is closer to what audiences may expect from Shakespearean language. The gods, in terms of language, do “whatever they want” and play around with the traditional Shakespearean dialect and more modern ways of speaking. Although the language is played around with in this production, the physical environment of this show will be an homage to the raucous staging of Shakespeare’s Globe. This piece will be performed in an Alley / Environmental style staging which will have audiences on both sides of the play space, with the action literally being right in the middle of the spectators. This environmental staging and unique casting and adaption of this Shakespeare classic will surely set the tone for a modern theatrical experience for the university.

The same can be said for the next show of the season, “She Kills Monsters.” This piece is directed by a new MU professor named Jonathan Strayer. Strayer has had experience in scenic design and carpentry, but also has had experiences teaching at various universities throughout the local area. He also started a theatre company with his wife called Ghostlight Productions. The theatre had open air Shakespeare productions, which brought the works of the bard to their local community. His expertise in Shakespeare are being put to use this season

as he is the assistant director of the Fall's "Midsummer Night's Dream," and plans to add his classical experience in Shakespeare into this greatly contemporary Dungeons and Dragons world of "She Kills Monsters." The play takes place in the hyper fantastical world of D & D with a human story of a young teacher named Agnes who is going through the grieving process of the death of her sister, Tilly. After she finds Tilly's old Dungeons and Dragons journal, Agnes digs deeper into the fantastical world of Dungeons and Dragons that her sister loved so much, and in turn learns more of her own family and past.

Strayer hopes this play brings a Dungeon and Dragons loving crowd that may not come to the theatre as often. It is not necessary to know about the D & D world prior to seeing the play, as the playwright, Qui Nguyen, explains the world throughout the piece. Strayer does plan to hold a D & D game for the cast to bring a sense of bonding, perspective and community from the very beginning of the creative process. The director also sees room for new creative talents as the play also incorporates unique and heightened fantastical elements such as puppetry, music, anime influenced costumes, stylized sound effects, and even fight choreography. These unique creative elements Strayer hopes will attract new students and talents in the sound world and even in departments not as often represented in the Theatre department.

Along with these two plays, this season will also include three monthly shows as part of a new series of unique performing arts experiences called

Entertainment 42. The Entertainment 42 shows will occur in Dutcher's Studio Theatre at the end of every month. They are three shows that go beyond the typical mainstage season, and instead offer audiences experimental and completely student driven entertainment. These shows strive to bring together talents and art not often represented in the Millersville Theatre season. The first show "Nox lam Vox" is a talk/ variety comedic show that will occur on Friday nights. On Saturdays, "Often Unheard" will play which is an underground style music show that features music that is not normally heard or represented on campus. The last show is "Game On," which is a student run game show that will play on Sundays at the end of every month in the semester. Each of these shows is an hour or less and is designed for the Millersville student body by students.

The Millersville theatre season of this year is one of community and innovation. With a brand new adaptation of a classic with "A Midsummer Night's Dream," the more contemporary Dungeons and Dragons themed "She Kills Monsters," and the exciting innovation of the brand new Entertainment 42 series, this season will offer Millersville audiences a chance to see something innovative and truly singular to our campus. It is also a hope that theatergoers are being challenged and entertained. This year's pieces bring together the old theatrical traditions with the cutting edge in a way that will bring our community together as an exciting artistic destination.

[Tweet](#)

Share this: