



We loved it!



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Dartmouth Professor Andrew Garrod has somehow done it again, though we should not be surprised as he seems to raise his standards of excellence with each of his Shakespearean productions. As *You Like It*, the 8th Shakespeare play to be performed by Youth Bridge Global and the Marshall Islands High School, thrilled huge crowds for four consecutive nights. This play was unique in a number of ways: First and foremost was the enormous amount of comedy involved in the play that found the air of each night filled with laughter from the beginning of the play to the end, and as we all know, this is a country that desperately needs this form of comedic relief. It was refreshingly wonderful to watch the audience with pride-filled smiles just frozen upon their faces for the entire three hours of the performance.

Secondly, the commanding dramatic elements created by the directors within the play itself were amazing. This production featured three songs by soloists, beautifully choreographed dances and a pair of fight scenes that were so realistic that on Wednesday evening several young children burst out in tears when Oliver (John Riklon) and Orlando (Selvenious Marvin) expressed their brotherly rivalry by flinging each other violently back and forth across the stage. The fight scene between the giant wrestler, Charles (Jovilisi Fotofili), and the small but powerful Orlando, performed with an incredible amount of intensity each and every night, had the audience cheering with delight when the smaller man eventually defeated his massive, overconfident combatant. What can we say about Selvenious Marvin except BRAVO! What a performance!

The casting for this show was flawless. Both actresses playing Rosalind on alternate nights (Wanda Bobo and Roselina Jones) were superb and electrifying. In this particular Shakespeare play the female lead character of Rosalind is burdened with the vast majority of the dialogue on top of having to pretend to be a member of the opposite sex for most of the performance, never easily achieved. It was stunning to watch both Wanda and Roselina carry themselves powerfully and elegantly across the stage time and time again without a hitch in the recitation of their lines. They held us spellbound with the rise and fall of the wide range of emotions that the role demanded of them.

The two women playing Rosalind's cousin, Celia, on alternate nights (Yolanie Jurlang and Maria



Top: Stars Roselina Jones as Rosalind and Selvenious Marvin as Orlando. Above left: Ann Abija as Phoebe and Yoda Mewa as Silvius. Left: Jonathan Marable as Touchtone the clown. Above: John Riklon as Oliver. Photos: Carleigh Beriont and Isaac Marty.

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John), were also excellent and helped make long sections of dialogue between the cousins highly entertaining.

Tom Wonne, who played Le Beau, a courtier, had the audience chuckling each and every time he opened his mouth because his slight build housed such a booming, confident and commanding voice. Jonathan Marable, a teacher at MIHS who played Touchtone the clown, had us hanging on his every word, though his intricate body movements helped the audience understand his intentions and emotions so well that we barely had to listen to his dialogue; his clownish physical presence on the stage was unequalled and he was simply a joy to watch.

The characters of Silvius and

Phoebe, played by Yoda Mewa and Ann Abija, were also perfectly cast and had the entire crowd roaring at their antics as Phoebe stormed across the stage fighting off her love-starved suitor. The excitement and anticipation of the audience grew each time they took the stage.

Bate Dismas as the gentleman Jaques carried off the role with an air of dignity that we have come to expect from Bate. It is said that a production is only as good as your supporting actors, and the choice of Bate to play this role showed a subtle though important knowledge of his skills.

Rounding out the great casting selections were Rilometo Lajar as Iroj Senior, Mackson Jesse as Iroj Frederick, Lucky Lucky as

a shepherd, and Rimel Daniel as Adam the servant, who had us all thoroughly convinced that he was 70 years old. Leenson Daniel as Oliver's servant, Yosko Kaminaga as Audrey, Rodney Kajidrik as Sir Martext, and Eugene Dujmovic, Kersey Nelson, Neilson Aneo, Wayne Bungilik and Gabriel Barry playing attendants and pages all performed well in their supporting roles.

The three solo numbers sung by Jeffrey Alik as Amiens, Shanice Kaminaga as a Page, and on alternate nights, Rutha Pedro and Save Filolita as Hymen, the Goddess of Marriage, showed so much bravery that the jaws of the audience just seemed to hang in awe as they moved through their songs. The idea of young, shy islanders standing and soloing before a crowd of over 1,000 people was an astounding achievement both for themselves and the directors of the play.

By combining great casting and acting, fabulous action scenes and a witty, Marshallese translation of *As You Like It* by Alson Kelen, the little makeshift theater by the Marshall Islands High School managed to take us all back to the time of Shakespeare. He would have been proud of the Friday

and Saturday night performances as huge numbers of people, young and old, packed every square inch of the seating area to marvel, laugh and shout in delight as this production unfolded and made the hours just evaporate from our lives.

The costumes put together by Mona Strauss for these plays have always been exceptional and for this play this standard was easily met, as were the set decorations, lighting, makeup and props. Any time you put together a production like this, the smallest attention to detail adds significantly to the magic of the theater, as was the case with the magnificent "temporary" tattoo work by John Aliefaio for some of the male actors and dancers.

We have always held Andrew Garrod in great reverence for bringing Shakespeare to the Marshall Islands — indeed, it seems as if every production lifts him to a higher place in our hearts. What a gift these productions have been for all of us, from those involved in the creation and direction of the plays to those of us who show up for a single evening of fun. These theatrical productions have become the highlight of the year for many of us, so keep them coming Professor Garrod!