

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Cast announced for *Much Ado About Nothing*, opening August 15 on the Common

**Pittsfield Shakespeare in the Park returns on Third Thursday
for eight free performances!**

"I do love nothing in the world so well as you—is not that strange?"
—*Much Ado About Nothing*

PITTSFIELD, MA — Pittsfield Shakespeare in the Park returns with its fifth anniversary production, *Much Ado About Nothing*, which opens next Thursday, August 15 at 8pm, following Pittsfield's Third Thursday festivities.

Directed by Maizy Broderick Scarpa and featuring a cast of PSP favorites and newcomers, *Much Ado* is Shakespeare's most popular romantic comedy of dueling lovers and dangerous rumors, featuring the famously witty on-again-off-again lovers Beatrice and Benedick. Beatrice's cousin Hero and the young soldier Claudio meet and fall in love, but when a man spreads nasty rumors about her, Hero's voice is silenced and their relationship torn apart. Loyalties are tested as the community responds, including a ragtag group of officers who just might save the day.

Returning to the Common stage are Pittsfield Shakespeare veterans Patrick Toole as Benedick (*The Tempest*), Brittany Nicholson as Hero (*Twelfth Night*), Christopher Brophy as Leonato and Borachio (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *The Tempest*) and Julie Castagna as Conrade/Friar (*The Tempest*). Joining them are newcomers Allie Galen as Beatrice, Joe Cardozo as Don Pedro/Oatcake, Ari Meyerowitz as Don John/Sexton, Merudjina Normil as Claudio/Seacoal, and Tess McHugh as Margaret/Verges.

Much Ado About Nothing opens August 15, following Pittsfield's 3rd Thursdays street festival that evening, and runs Thursdays–Sundays at 8pm for eight performances ending August 25. Performances take place at the First Street Common in Pittsfield, located next to the Zion Lutheran Church. Admission is free. Audiences are invited to bring picnic blankets and lawn chairs and enjoy the romance under the stars!

Much Ado About Nothing is made possible through the generous support of The Feigenbaum Foundation, the production's Lead Sponsor. Additional in-kind support is provided by the Zion Lutheran Church of Pittsfield, the City of Pittsfield, and a coalition of support from individuals and local businesses.

PRESENTING ROCK ON! LIVE PRE-SHOW SERENADES

Pittsfield Shakespeare in the Park has partnered with the young musicians from Rock On! to present a series of six pre-show music acts before Friday, Saturday and Sunday evening performances. Music

begins at 7:15pm (and the show starts at 8pm). Audiences are encouraged to arrive early and enjoy a picnic on the lawn. The schedule of performers will be posted on <http://www.pittsfieldshakespeare.org>

AT A GLANCE

Much Ado About Nothing

Written by William Shakespeare

Directed by Maizy Broderick Scarpa

Costume design by Brittney Holland

Scenic design by Ron Piazza

Lighting design by Lucas Pawelski

Stage Managed by Sadie Clouser

Cast: Christopher Brophy, Julie Castagna, Joe Cardozo, Allie Galen, Tess McHugh, Ari Meyerowitz, Brittany Nicholson, Merudjina Normil, Patrick Toole.

Location: First Street Common in Pittsfield

Performances: August 15–25, Thursdays, Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays at 8pm

For cast and rehearsal photos visit <http://www.pittsfieldshakespeare.org/photos>

ABOUT PITTSFIELD SHAKESPEARE IN THE PARK

Launched in the summer of 2014, Pittsfield Shakespeare in the Park presents fully-produced performances of Shakespeare's plays under the evening sky for free to the public. Thousands of people have enjoyed its productions of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (2014), *Romeo and Juliet* (2015), *The Tempest* (2016), and *Twelfth Night* (2017).

For photos of past shows visit <http://www.pittsfieldshakespeare.org/photos>

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