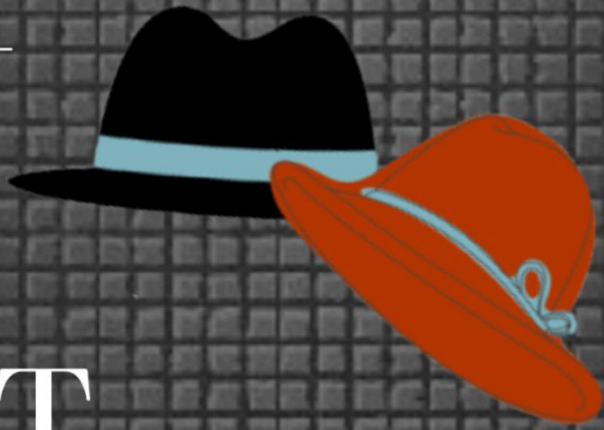


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Comedy by:
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MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING

By William Shakespeare

CAST

MARGARET/WATCHWOMAN.....	Miranda Blum
DON JOHN.....	Cody Bro
BORACHIO.....	William Buckley
DOGBERRY.....	Bear Golden
DON PEDRO.....	Bill Griffith
VERGES/MESSENGER.....	Karianne Griffith
BENEDICK.....	Paul Hartwell
CONRADE.....	Samantha Hartwell
FRIAR FRANCIS.....	Bobby Havens
BEATRICE.....	Andrea Hough
URSULA/WATCHWOMAN.....	Harleigh Irizarry
CLAUDIO.....	Michael Rodriguez
ANTONIA/WATCHWOMAN.....	Abeth Spencer
LEONATA.....	Colleen Rose Thompson
HERO.....	Taylor Tunnell

PRODUCTION TEAM

DIRECTOR/STAGE COMBAT.....	Van Rockwell
STAGE MANAGER/ASSISTANT DIRECTOR/CHOREOGRAPHER.....	Nicole Thompson
PRODUCER.....	Nena Rippenkroeger
DRAMATURG.....	Ric Alpers
SOUND DESIGNER.....	Van Rockwell
SET BUILDER.....	Mike Rippenkroeger
SET PAINTER.....	Michelle Johnston
LIGHT DESIGNER.....	Jonah Cain
LIGHTING OPERATOR.....	Wyatt Dybig-Pawelko
PROPS DESIGNER.....	Susan Tejera
COSTUME DESIGNER.....	Ivy Pickard
SOUND BOARD OPERATOR.....	Autumn Kuhn
MAKEUP/HAIR.....	Van Rockwell, Bear Golden



STARLIGHT

COMMUNITY THEATER

BOARD MEMBERS

President.....Cathy Merrill
Vice President Elizabeth Spencer
SecretarySamantha Hartwell
Members At Large..... Justin Cain, Craig Frooninckx, Lynn Golden,
..... Elise Kurbatt, Heather Riddle, Christina Robinson
Member Emeritus/Co-FounderPatricia Bennett
Members Emeritus.....Raquel L Jarvill, Barbara Surloff

OPERATIONAL DIRECTORS

Managing Director.....Nena Rippenkroeger
Artistic Director.....Dan Ashlock

MISSION STATEMENT

Starlight Community Theatre is a 501c3 non-profit community theatre corporation dedicated to providing live theatre to entertain and enrich our community and to encourage youth and adult participation by providing growth and educational opportunities through a variety of theatrical experiences, both on and off stage.



A Special Thank You to all who helped with this production, especially:

Ric Alpers
Stephanie Cartwright
Keath Hall
Hillary Low

Much Ado About Nothing – Dramaturgy by Ric Alpers

The year is 1933 in Chicago, IL. Don Pedro, a successful gangster and booze runner, along with his hired enforcers Benedick and Claudio, visit Leonato at her club. It is here she lives with her lovely young daughter, Hero, the club's singer; Beatrice, a hot-shot reporter for the local paper; and Antonia, editor of the local paper who is also Beatrice's mother. Claudio falls in love with Hero and their marriage is agreed upon. Beatrice and Benedick despise love and engage in comic banter carried on from their past.

To pass the time in the week before the wedding, the lovers and their friends plot to make Beatrice and Benedick, who are clearly meant for each other, fall in love with each other, by a trick in which Benedick will overhear his friends talking of Beatrice's supposed secret love for him, and vice versa. Their tricks prove successful, and soon Beatrice and Benedick fall secretly in love with each other.

Don John, Don Pedro's son, whose drunkenness and gambling got him into some trouble in New York City, plots with his two associates, Borachio and Conrade; local paparazzies, to make Hero appear unfaithful in front of Claudio and Don Pedro. Believing he has seen Hero being unfaithful to him, Claudio humiliates Hero by suddenly accusing her of lechery on the day of their wedding and abandoning her at the altar.

Hero's family members decide to pretend she died suddenly of shock and grief and to hide her away while they wait for the truth about her innocence to come to light. In the aftermath of the rejection, Benedick and Beatrice finally confess their love to one another.

Fortunately, hired 'watchwomen' overhear Borachio bragging about his crime. Dogberry and Verges, private detectives from the Big Apple, out for Don John, ultimately arrest both Borachio and Conrad. Everyone learns Hero is really innocent, and Claudio, who believes she is dead, grieves for her.

Leonata demands Claudio, as punishment, to tell everybody in the city how innocent Hero was. She also demands Claudio to marry her "niece" - a girl who, she says, looks much like the dead Hero. Claudio is prepared to marry the mysterious, masked woman he believes is Hero's cousin. When Hero reveals herself as the masked woman, Claudio is overwhelmed with joy. Benedick then asks Beatrice if she will marry him, and after some arguing, they agree.





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CAST

Abeth Spencer (*Antonia/Watchwoman*) - Abeth Spencer is thrilled to be cast in this production of *Much Ado About Nothing*. She would like to thank Van and Nicole for casting her in something so biographical - like the characters in *Much Ado About Nothing*, she is also a flighty goofball. While she has a great affinity for the source material, she does not have a great affinity for writing cast bios. Luckily, her younger brother does.

Andrea Hough (*Beatrice*) - Andrea Hough is falling all over herself with excitement to be back on the Starlight stage! Previous Starlight credits include Nurse Ratched in *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* (BroadwayWorld Award nomination), Dolly Tate in *Annie Get Your Gun*, and Captain Belle Crozier in *The Present Tense*. Other recent credits include *The Balance of Equality* and *The Best Man* at the Herberger Theater Center, and *Motherhood Out Loud* with Virtual Theater Lab (BroadwayWorld Award nomination). "Many thanks to Tim, Tami, Rob, Robyn, and Reagan for your constant love and support, and to the amazing Much Ado cast and crew for lifting me up when I'm down. What a "trip" this has been!"

Bear Golden (*Dogberry*) - Bear is thrilled to be doing his first Shakespeare production with such a stellar cast and crew. He was most recently seen as Patrick Star (*The Spongebob Musical*) and Billy Bibbit (*One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest*) at Starlight. He has also been seen in *Carrie the Musical* (Stokes), ... *Putnam County Spelling Bee* (Mitch Mahoney), and *Puffs* (J. Finch-Fletchly (Zoni Nom.) as well as countless other shows! Bear is incredibly thankful for his friends and family who put up with all this theater bologna, to Van and Nicole, and his mother for showing him the way to the stage.

Bill Griffith (*Don Pedro*) - Bill is excited to return to the Starlight stage. He was last here as Aide Warren in *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*. His favorite past roles include: Katurian in *The Pillowman*, Paul in *Barefoot in the Park* and Bill W in *Bill W and Dr Bob* all in IL. A recent AZ transplant, he is grateful to Van and Nicole for giving him this opportunity and having the chance to share the stage with some of his family.

Bobby Havens (*Friar Francis*) - Bobby Havens is excited to be cast in his first Shakespeare production. Bobby is a two-time ariZoni-nominated performer. His credits include productions at Hale Center Theatre, Stage Left Productions, Scottsdale's Desert Stages, Don Bluth Front Row Theatre, Desert Foothills Theater, OTV Performing Arts Studio, Sun City Players, Ghostlight Theater and Westbrook Village. He was last seen as Uncle Billy in *It's a Wonderful Life* at DBFRT. Bobby is a retired motivational speaker, contracted trainer, sports announcer, ordained minister, published writer and thespian. Bobby would like to give YOU a standing ovation for supporting live theater.

Cody Bro (*Don John*) - This is Cody Bro's fifth production at Starlight that he has been a part of. This is Cody Bro's first Shakespere production on the community theater stage, but not the first time he has played a villain. When Cody Bro is not acting, he is a teacher. One day soon Cody Bro hopes to become the most widely popular actor, a household name across the world. In his spare time Cody Bro

spends time with his friends or his wife, Emily.

Colleen Rose Thompson (Leonata) - Colleen Rose Thompson is back again at Starlight Community Theater! She's excited to explore the characters of Shakespeare's *Much Ado About Nothing* with her fellow cast and crew. Some favorite recent roles include: Old Lady Jenkins (*The Spongebob Musical*; Starlight), Candy Starr (*One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*; Starlight), Clarissa Hailsham-Brown (Agatha Christie's *Spider's Web*; Desert Stages). ig: @colleen.rose.art #HopeThroughHollis

Harleigh Irizarry (Ursula/Watchwoman) - Harleigh Irizarry is ecstatic to be back on stage performing Shakespeare once again. She was recently in *Holy Matrimony!* as Betty and won an NYA for her portrayal as Puck in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. She would like to thank her family, friends, and boyfriend for always supporting her, and Van, who made this take on Shakespeare an absolute blast. Enjoy the show!

Karianne Griffith (Verges/Messenger) - Karianne Griffith has been heavily involved with community theatre for over six years, but this is her debut performance with Starlight Community Theater. Previous stage credits include May Dison in *Postmortem* by Ken Ludwig, Corie Bratter in *Barefoot in the Park* by Neil Simon, and Lois Wilson in *Bill W. and Dr. Bob* by Samuel French, to name a few. It has always been on Karianne's Theater Bucket List to gender bend for a role! She is excited to meet new friends. She is also honored to once again be sharing the stage with her husband, Bill. Thank you to the cast & crew for being so welcoming. Thank you to Van & Nicole for this opportunity. Break legs everyone!

Michael Rodriguez (Claudio) Michael Rodriguez is excited to perform his second show at Starlight! Michael was seen previously at Starlight in *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* as Aide Williams. He is a college student working towards a degree in theatre. Michael would like to thank Van and Nicole for their incredible help and direction and his fellow cast for being extremely talented and awesome. He hopes you enjoy the show!

Miranda Blum (Margaret/First Watchwoman) Miranda has been on hiatus from theater since high school. This is her debut performance with Starlight. Miranda hails from Chicago. She moved to Arizona almost 8 months ago. Miranda has enjoyed being apart of such a wonderful cast and getting back into theater. "Thank you, Van and Nicole, for giving me this opportunity to make new friends and make Arizona feel more like home."

Paul Hartwell (Benedick) - Paul Hartwell has not performed Shakespeare since college (about 10 years ago) and never auditioned because he didn't understand the language of the Bard. Finally, after all those years, he is now mostly fluent. He was recently seen as Nicky in *Bell, Book And Candle* at Don Bluth Front Row Theatre. He would like to dedicate his performance to his daughter who will be born June. Enjoy!

Samantha Hartwell (Conrade) - Samantha is excited to be back inside Starlight. You may have seen her in a few Starlight or DST shows in the past. In this show, Sam is

challenged to get re-acquainted with Shakespeare and she's thankful for everyone who has been able to "translate" the show for her to understand the plot. She is excited to gain a new appreciation for his work! She enjoys rotating roles between acting, stage managing, tech, and set design. Sam is a marketing specialist by day and artist by night. She is also a former bodybuilder taking the term literally as she and her husband, Paul, await to welcome their first child due in June!

Taylor Tunnell (Hero) - This is Taylor's second show at Starlight Community Theater, her first being the role of Nurse Flinn in *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*. She is enthusiastic to act in a Shakespeare play which more aligns with her field of interest; you may have seen her perform multiple sonnets at the Goodyear Shakespearean Festival on 2020. Hot off the heels of performing as Violet in Don Bluth Theatre's *It's A Wonderful Life* performing alongside Bobby Havens (Friar Frances), Taylor is thrilled by continuous momentum of lucky opportunities she's had in theatre. She would like to give a special thanks to the cast of *Much Ado About Nothing* for their continued support of her.

William Buckley (Borachio) - William Buckley has been happily involved in local Phoenix theatre for the past 4 years, now even on the board of directors for Showcase Community Theater. This is his first chance to work with the crew at Starlight Community Theatre and his fourth time performing *Much Ado About Nothing*! It is an absolute pleasure.

PRODUCTION CREW

Van Rockwell (Director/Stage Combat/Makeup/Hair) - Van Rockwell is delighted and honored to be returning to Starlight Community Theater, and couldn't be happier with the cast, designers, and crew for coming aboard. Prior directing credits for Starlight include *One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest*, *Four Weddings and an Elvis*, *A Murder is Announced*, and *You Can't Take It With You*. This year, Van recently made his directing debut at Sun City Grand Drama Club with *The Unexpected Guest* as well as directed his first musical, *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* (AriZoni Nominee) in rep, with *Bonnie & Clyde* for Limelight Youth Theatre. Previous directing credits include *Miss Nelson is Missing* (AriZoni Award), also with Limelight; *She Kills Monsters* for Mesa Encore Theatre's main stage at the Arts Center; *Boy Gets Girl* and *Jesus Hopped The A-Train* for Mesa Encore Theatre's Black Box; and *Blacklisters* for Brelby Theatre. During the pandemic, Van premiered his original play, *Love Quotations*, for Virtual Theatre Lab; and co-directed *The Laramie Project* with Mesa Encore Theatre in collaboration with Virtual Theatre Lab.

"Thank you, Starlight (Dan, Nena, everyone on the board) for the opportunity, Nicole, our designers Jonah, Susan, Autumn, Michelle, Mike, and Ivy; my pets Murphy, Darcy, and Carmen Sandiego; and of course, Mom and Pop, for raising me to enjoy, and encourage me to participate in, any capacity of the theater and stage and be open to new challenges."

“Though the play is comical by nature, and all moments of drunkenness are played for comedic effect – please do not drive home drunk or impaired. Please use Lyft or Uber.”

Nicole Thompson (*Assistant Director/Stage Manager/Choreographer*) This is Nicole’s 4th production here at Starlight including *One Flew Over The Cuckoo’s Nest* (Stage Manager/Sandra), *The Grimm Fairy Tale Spectacular* (Minor Roles), *Dracula* (Lucy Westenra). This is Nicole’s second time working with Van and is very excited to be on this project. Nicole has both directed and professionally Stage Managed around the valley including *Frozen Jr* (Directing, Choreography) at Desert Stages Theatre, *Henry V* (Stage Managing, Lights) with Ronin Theatre Company and many more. “I would like to thank my Cast, Van, and Starlight for this opportunity.”

Michelle Johnston (*Set Painter*) - Michelle has been a part of Starlight for over 7 years now when she painted her first set for *Beauty and the Beast*. When not designing enchanted woods or stately living rooms or sneaking in the occasional role on stage, she's an investigator at MUFG Union Bank. She's been in the field of financial crimes for over 20 years and retired from the US Army reserves in 2016 after 26 years of service.

Ivy Pickard (*Costume Designer*) - Ivy is excited to be working with Starlight Community Theater for the production of *Much Ado About Nothing*. This is Ivy's second time doing costumes for a theatre and truly enjoys the entire experience. Ivy is a stay-at-home mom that has picked up many tips and tricks over the years and is excited to put them to use for this production. “Shout out to my family for all the support!”

Autumn Kuhn (*Sound Board Operator*) - Autumn Kuhn just recently returned to the technical side of theatre after a brief hiatus. She returned doing sound for Starlight Theater’s production of *Spongebob The Musical* and is thrilled to continue her passion for *Much Ado About Nothing*. She would like to thank Paul and Samantha Hartwell for bringing her back into theatre.



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