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Cyrano on Stage in Orinda

By Andrea A. Firth



Laura Morgan as Roxanne, Peter McArthur as Christian, and Edwin Peabody (on left) as Cyrano de Bergerac in Orinda Starlight Village Players' current production Photo Ohlen Alexander

loneliness while knowing he is not a lesser man."

The Starlight Village Players Production of Cyrano de Bergerac will run through August 15th. Show times are Fridays and Saturdays at 8:30 p.m., with additional performances on Sunday, August 9th at 8 p.m. and Thursday, August 13th at 8 p.m. Tickets are available at the door. For more information go to www.orsvp.org.

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After enjoying larger than usual crowds for their Agatha Christie season opener, the Orinda Starlight Village Players launched their production of Cyrano de Bergerac last weekend on a warm starry night at their outdoor amphitheater tucked in the corner of the Orinda Community Park. Starring as Cyrano in his first play with the Village Players is Moraga resident Edwin Peabody. "It's the true definition of community theater. It's a grass roots organization, and I really appreciate it," states Peabody. "This play is a true love story," says director Suzan Lorraine who has been acting and directing with the Starlight Village Players for over ten years. "It has all the elements of the best plays in the world. It's absolutely a classic," adds Lorraine who admits this is the first "classic" that she has directed. "I was terrified of this play...but it's been fantastic," she adds.

Lorraine and husband, Bill, who plays the bad guy Count de Guiche in the production, worked through several versions of the play to whittle the 200-page script down to a manageable two hour and fifteen minute performance. Written in verse with rhyming couplets, the play is based on the life of Hector Savinien de Cyrano de Bergerac, a 17th century play write with a swashbuckling manner. While portraits suggest the original Cyrano had a large nose, the prominence of his proboscis is a central theme to both comic and dramatic moments in the play.

"When Edie puts on his prosthetic nose each night, he transforms. He becomes Cyrano," says Lorraine who has been thrilled with the casting. "I could not have gotten a better cast."

Peabody describes digging deep into his early life in order to connect to his inner-Cyrano. "He overcompensates for his nose with his sword," says Peabody. "He had is own 'small man's' disease." Standing just 4'10" as a sophomore in high school, Peabody could relate. Although he experienced a late growth spurt, Peabody still recalls being teased for his short stature. "A couple weeks into rehearsal I found a real connection to the character-his feeling of