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Enjoy this zany farce under the stars

Submitted by David Dierks



IT RUNS IN THE FAMILY BY RAY COONEY

Image provided

The Orinda Starlight Village Players' (OrSVP) production of Ray Cooney's "It Runs in the Family," directed by Suzan Lorraine and Jill Gelster will run through Aug. 12 at the Orinda Community Center Park Amphitheater. Set in a hospital, this British farce sees Dr. Mortimore fend off a paternity suit, a former mistress, a punkish son and various lunatics running in and out of doors mistaking everybody for someone else, all while perfecting his speech for an international conference.

"There's nothing quite like a good farce with a great cast to make theater the fun it should be - lots of laughter, action and good camaraderie," said Lorraine. "Cooney has written some of the best and audiences always leave with huge grins."

Gelster added, "I cannot wait. Both Suzan and I are very excited about this show and are so lucky to have this cast. It is going to be a blast."

Farces present a unique set of difficulties for the stage. "It translates into a fast-paced series of comic situations that happen to real people," Gelster said. "With a farce, the characters are not trying to be funny. Their lives are just pushed into comic situations."

"Farce can't drag or it becomes too real rather than funny," added Lorraine. "Farce is at the top of my list of favorite genres. There's so much good energy."

Lorraine and Gelster are longtime volunteers with OrSVP and other community theaters in the Bay Area.

"I've directed over 60 shows during the last 30 years and this is the first time I've worked with a co-director," Lorraine said. "I couldn't ask for a better partner than Jill Gelster."

The all-volunteer Orinda Starlight Village Players is the city's only nonprofit community theater and has performed at the park for 40 years.

"We are very grateful for our sponsors, the Orinda Community Foundation, Zamboni's Pizza, Casa Orinda and Geppetto's Café, as well as our program advertisers," Gelster said. "Without their support, we would not be able to continue to be part of the fabric of Orinda."

"This entire theater community is one of the best and a great place for newbies, directors and actors, to get their feet on the boards," Lorraine said.

Performances through Aug. 12 are Friday and Saturday (8:30 p.m.), Sunday, Aug. 6 (4 p.m.) and Thursday, Aug. 10 at 8 p.m. For more information, visit www.orsp.org.

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