

'Twelfth Night' delights audience on shore of Tahoe

By Kathryn Reed

INCLINE VILLAGE – Twins have a penchant for playing trickery on unsuspecting soles.

In "Twelfth Night" the confusion is not the intentional making of Sebastian and Viola. They don't even know the other is alive. And to confuse things, Viola is passing herself off as a man.

Such are the mischievous musings of William Shakespeare in one of his more renowned comedic plays.

In its 39th season, the Lake Tahoe Shakespeare Festival is bringing "Twelfth Night" to the stage at Sand Harbor Tuesday-Sunday through Aug. 21.



Olivia, left, does not realize Cesario is really Viola in men's clothing.

Photos/Kathryn Reed

After a year without Shakespeare, the Barb is back at this outdoor stage on the shore of Lake Tahoe.

This is probably the best outdoor theater in the basin. The rocky ridge above is majestic, though no mountain bikers can be seen on the Flume Trail from this vantage point. Plenty of people are still on the beach when the doors open and before the 7:30pm performance begins.

It's a particularly warm night for Tahoe, though many are prepared with blankets on the back of chairs.

This production was particularly good because of the strong projection of voices by the entire cast. Shakespeare can be difficult enough at times to follow that when actors' voices are meek or muffled, the audience can be left wishing for Cliffs Notes. This definitely was not the case two nights ago.

The cast is delightful, the story captivating and the setting exquisite.

Laura Welsh Berg is engaging in her role as Viola/Cesario, as is Carie Kawa as Olivia.

While love is an overriding theme in so many of Shakespeare's plays, there always has to be a twist. "Twelfth Night" does not disappoint in this realm.

Some of the humor is adult in nature, but would likely go over the head of the younger ones in attendance.

The only disappointment Saturday night was the attendance. In years past there was not a speck of sand to be found to put a chair on. Not so now. But those who filled the seats were appreciative of the superb acting.



"Twelfth
Night" runs
through Aug.
21.

No longer do people have to bring their chairs. Beach chairs are set up – something that has been going on for a few years to maximize the space.

Gone this year are the added fees on tickets. The price ranges from \$15 to \$85. The most expensive – the ones closest to the stage – have more comfortable chairs and come with wait service for dinner.

Many people bring coolers full of food and libations, though an array of food choices is available.

One woman from Pasadena, at the festival for the first time, bought the cookbook "Shakespeare's Kitchen" to take home.

On Mondays the stage is not dark, but instead the theater has various offerings from the Sierra Nevada Ballet tonight to Chautauqua to musical groups.

More information about Lake Tahoe Shakespeare Festival is online.