

Valhalla: Striving to be the best



Quinn De Veaux and the Blue Beat Revue will be at the Boathouse Theatre on the South Shore on July 29.
Photo/Provided

By Evangeline Elston

One of the many special attributes of the Valhalla Boathouse Theatre is its size. At 164 seats it is intimate with a unique, rustic elegance. You feel, when you walk in that magic is about to happen ... and it inevitably does.

Because of its size the boathouse requires a special approach to programming for the Valhalla Art, Music & Theatre Festival. Artists and productions must be chosen specifically for their ability to bring the space to life and to fill it with something unique. Our artists don't always have the big names, but our venue and the quality of the performers are what set us apart from the big casinos and higher profile shows.

As the festival director I spend a great deal of time in the fall and winter selecting artists and performers and working with the Valhalla theater community to choose our line-up of summer entertainment. I look for an eclectic mix of music that

I feel will appeal to a wide range of folks. And of course theater productions are selected with the Boathouse and our audience specifically in mind. Our patrons are locals and visitors. Campers and summer homeowners. They are families, young adults and mature people. I want to honor them all with the lineup I select.

For example, this summer we are presenting, with the Dakota Organization, the American classic adapted from the screen "On Golden Pond" featuring an all-star cast of local actors. This production is perfectly suited for our theater, the setting and our audience. It has been very well received and will continue July 11-12 and July 16-18.

For live music I strive to attract artists who I feel will embody the spirit of our unique festival and fill the Boathouse Theatre with sound and audience. I book world music, jazz, rock, singer-songwriters, bluegrass, R&B, classical and country. Pretty much every genre is represented in our summer season.

Coming up we have some of the finest songwriters, players and performers in the musical world where I dwell coming to Valhalla. On July 15 the stylings of songs from the American songbook by local jazz vocalist June Joplin and Me & Bobby McGee. Then, on July 22 it's two of the finest singer-songwriters that I know of together on the Valhalla stage, Tasmanian born Audrey Auld and Sopchoppy, Florida native Grant Peebles. They are true song crafters and masterful, funny, engaging performers. From the urban grit of Oakland via the great state of Louisiana, Quinn Deveaux and the Blue Beat Revue will bring their full R&B sound, complete with back-up singers, to Valhalla on July 29. And it continues like this through August with bluegrass, roots rock, classical and country concerts.

The Tahoe Improv players continue their decade-long run at Valhalla all four Mondays in July and we have free outdoor

concerts featuring the best local talent available on July 12, July 19 and Aug. 2 from noon to 2 pm on the Grand Lawn. And our artists in residence are showing in the Viking Gallery through mid-July daily from 11am to 4pm. Gina Stowell offers her kids painting camp July 13-17 and again in August.

I'm proud of what we are building at Valhalla. I work very hard to bring the finest entertainment available to our little corner of the globe, nestled in the tall pines and on the shore of beautiful Lake Tahoe. It may be the best kept secret in arts festivals west of the Rocky Mountains now, but little by little we're going to let the world know what an amazing thing is happening here at Valhalla Tahoe.

Information and tickets are online.

Evangeline Elston is director of the Valhalla Art, Music & Theatre Festival.