

Production Notes

From the Director **Kristin Kundert-Gibbs**

As a director, I often think of a play as a musical score. There are times when the tempo is heavy and *largo* or light and *allegro*. The rhythm may be *legato* or *staccato*. Actors may whisper in hushed, breathy *pianissimos* or bellow in powerful *fortes*. Like music, live theatre has the power to move the soul of the listener to the heights of ecstasy or the depths of sorrow. As a director, I conduct my orchestra, the actors, through their score, the text of the play.

Shakespeare was aware of the power of music. His plays are filled with musical numbers and discussions about the beauty and ability of music to move the soul. *Much Ado About Nothing* in particular contains four musical numbers: during the masked ball to celebrate the return of the soldiers from war, before the entrapment of Benedict to soften his heart to love, at the funeral of Hero to mourn her passing, and finally in the wedding to rejoice in love and life. Shakespeare's audiences loved live musical performances intertwined with their theatre.

From the Musical Director **Jeffry Wages**

I am beyond excited (and have been since summer) to be the music director for a show such as Shakespeare's *Much Ado About Nothing*. The music featured in this particular production takes on a different approach than what one would usually find on the stage. From the very beginning, my goal for this process was to make it feel more like

When I began contemplating the text, I immediately knew I wanted live music as a part of our production. I considered several different styles that seemed to fit the action and mood of the play. I wanted music that would speak to a younger generation, one that might not know or like Shakespeare. If the audience could connect with the music, new life would be breathed into Shakespeare's words. Then one day, driving in the car, *Sigh No More* by Mumford and Sons came across my play list. The first line of the lyrics are, "Serve God, love me, and mend." I almost squealed in delight. This is a line spoken by Benedict to Beatrice in the play. I had found my music.

Of course the time period is wrong, but it seems to be in vogue in movies to mash up music with periods different than the setting. More importantly, the music feels like the play to me. It mixes sadness and joy. It is as rough-hewn as the planks of Shakespeare's Globe Theatre. And, importantly, I have never met a person that dislikes their music. It speaks to all generations. So as Orsino says in the play *Twelfth Night*, "If music be the food of love, play on!"



a collaborative effort than a dictatorship. I wanted rehearsals to feel like a group of friends having band practice rather than the structure of traditional music rehearsals. I am very pleased to say that I think we have accomplished this. Our wonderful Director, Kristin Kundert-Gibbs, and marvelous Stage Manager, Caroline Caldwell, gave us all the time and resources we needed to succeed. I am so grateful for them and for the musicians playing with me on stage. It truly was a blast from start to finish.