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ST. PETERSBURG SHAKESPEARE FEST RETURNS TO USFSP



The 2015 cast of As You Like It during the St. Petersburg Shakespeare Festival's inaugural year.

The St. Petersburg Shakespeare Festival returns to USF St. Petersburg with productions of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* Feb. 25-28 and *Cymbeline* March 3-6.

The event is a collaboration of the St. Petersburg Shakespeare Festival, the USF St. Petersburg Shakespeare Society, the Department of Verbal and Visual Arts, and the MLA in Liberal Studies Program. It also is funded as a USFSP 50th Anniversary Great Event by Wells Fargo.

In its second year, the event was conceived by USFSP alumna and Academic Program Specialist Veronica Matthews, and Dr. Starks-Estes, associate professor of English, chair of the Verbal and Visual Arts Department, and director of the MLA in Liberal Studies Program. The casts include USFSP students and members of the USFSP Shakespeare Society, alumni, and local professional actors.

"I'm very excited that our students are playing an evening more vital role in the St. Petersburg Festival this year," said Starks-Estes, whose students in her Shakespeare class are studying the plays and participating with the production on various levels through an experiential learning assignment. "The SPSF provides a wonderful opportunity for our students to become a part of the arts community in St. Petersburg."

"This year, we are even more excited to share our love of Shakespeare with USF St. Petersburg and the St. Petersburg community," said Veronica Matthews, who serves as artistic director for the festival and director of the production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. "Working with dramaturg Dr. Lisa Starks-Estes and *Cymbeline* director Jon VanMiddlesworth has been a joy, and the creative partnership with USFSP helps us thrive. We are a young company, but we are lucky to have amazing talent in our students, actors, and creative team."

The performances will be held at the USFSP's Williams House Courtyard at 7:30 p.m. Thursday-Saturday, and 4 p.m. on Sunday. Admission is "pay what you can" with a suggested donation of \$10. Audience members are encouraged to bring a blanket and cushions. Chairs also will be available.

For more information, visit [St. Petersburg Shakespeare Festival's Facebook page](#).

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