

## Pericles: A story unlike what you've seen before

With wizards, princesses, pirates, and a heart-wrenching story, SOU's Theatre Department presents its Spring Main Stage show: *Pericles*! This Shakespeare romance is full of tragedy, romance, and beautiful imagery that is sure to take your breath away. What's better: it opens this Thursday May 16th at 8pm!

*Pericles* is a dramedy-fairytale written towards the end of Shakespeare's career with George Wilkins that follows the titular character through his ups and major downs as he fights the sea for answers, honor, and his wife and daughter. *Pericles* himself is a giant walking metaphor for letting yourself be vulnerable even through the harshness that the world (or in his case, the gods) throws at you.

Aidan Jenkins, junior, says that *Pericles* "Leads from the heart." He explains that the character goes through major changes throughout the story—at the beginning, his heart is the most open and he is full of wonder, but as disillusion happens from the world he eventually closes off.

"Each thing that happens to him is a test from the gods, who he has a ton of hope and faith in. So he's always asking questions to them, like 'why is this happening?'" *Pericles* is eventually much stronger and wiser by the end due to everything he went through.

"Adversity is necessary for growth," says Jenkins. "Comfort doesn't always equal a fulfilling life. Hardships or being broken is sometimes what somebody needs to find who they really are and there's strength in being able to lose."

When asked to describe *Pericles* in one word, Jenkins mentioned blue—not only because it is a tragic show, but because the set has a lot of blue in it. Nina Schiefelbein, scenic designer, explained that because a lot of the big moments happen on the sea in the story, they wanted to design the set in a way where it's difficult to tell where the sky ends and where the sea begins.

"It's the same with *Pericles*' mind," said Schiefelbein. "Everything is swirling together like water and that fluidity allows it all to work, it's not grounded in one specific thing."

Both Jenkins and Schiefelbein agree that the production of *Pericles* has included a lot of communication and collaboration. The script isn't only Shakespeare—sometimes it's Wilkins' voice, other times it's Director David McCandless'—and some things are constantly being changed and adapted. Plus, the show is being turned into a musical! Even with its challenges, Jenkins and Schiefelbein both said that seeing it all come together from preliminary sketches to an entire world is what makes the art form so inspiring.

The production is something new for everyone involved: it's nothing like they've ever done before, it's a learning experience, and it's BIG! *Pericles* is all about adventure, voyage, growth, and challenges that are sure to speak to everyone in the audience in one way or another—you won't want to miss this! *Pericles* is rated PG-13 for adult

themes and will run approximately 2 hours and 30 minutes including a 15- minute intermission.

Tickets are available in-person at the OCA Box Office Monday-Friday from Noon-6pm on the Southern Oregon University Campus. Reserved seats are \$25 per person/\$20 for seniors. Accommodations for seating and listening devices are available by request by emailing the Box Office at [boxoffice@sou.edu](mailto:boxoffice@sou.edu) For tickets call the OCA Box Office at 541-552-6348, or purchase online at <https://sou.universitytickets.com>.

*By OCA staff writer Sierra Jameson*