

Almost, Maine

Written by Editor

Tuesday, 23 September 2014 14:09



On October 10, Shakespeare Rep, Beaufort's professional classical theatre company launches its Season of Wonders with the quirky contemporary comedy *Almost, Maine* at the USCB Center for the Arts.

Almost, Maine

is a study in contrasts: alternately funny and heartbreaking, it is about simple folks grappling with complicated matters of the heart.

Following a successful off-Broadway run in 2006, the play has quietly advanced to a position as one of the most produced plays in America; globally, it has been produced by over 2000 theatre companies and translated into 11 languages.

So, why have most people never heard of it?

Director Debra Charlton explains: "*Almost, Maine* has acquired an almost cult status among theatre audiences. Word of mouth about this wonderful and slightly odd little play has spread

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from theatre to theatre across the US. It has literally crept up on us to become a new standard in the modern American repertoire."

Almost, Maine is an unlikely hit—it has evoked such diverse comparisons as *The Twilight Zone*, *Love, Actually* and Thornton Wilder's Americana masterpiece *Our Town*.

Comprised of 9 interrelated story lines, the characters have struck a chord in the hearts of audiences with their essential decency, vulnerability and kindness. These are people we like.

Written by John Cariani, a Tony nominated performer, it is an actor-centered play. The Shakespeare Rep cast brings together some of the Lowcountry's finest acting talent, including 4 real-life couples: Terri and Chad Hsu; Elaine and Jason Lake; Michael Weaver and Christine Grefe, and Libby Ricardo and George Pate. Add to the mixture Kate Dzvonik, an International student from Kazakhstan who is completing a professional acting internship with the Company as part of her final year in the MFA program at USC; Erin Dailey, a Juilliard alum, whom you might have seen as Lady Macbeth in Shakespeare Rep's premiere production of "Macbeth" last spring; Pat Morgan, a staple character actor in the Bluffton theatre scene, and Savannah native Jordan Jones, a successful classical performer who recently completed a run as Oberon in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* for Shakespeare & Co, one of America's premiere Shakespearean theatres.

The production is directed by Debra Charlton, founder of Shakespeare Rep and an acclaimed Shakespearean director and teacher. Jason Lake (*Macbeth*, *Grease*) designs the set and lights.

The production will run October 10th through 12th at the USCB Center for the Arts. Showtimes are 7:30 on Friday and Saturday, 3:00 on Sunday. All tickets \$20.