

MEDIA ADVISORY --

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Inland Stage Features Summer Repertory Festival and Season Auditions

Inland Stage Company's Summer Repertory Festival offerings are diverse, according to Artistic Director Jim Marbury. The Festival premiere's July 14 through 24 at the Esplanade Art Center in San Jacinto.

"We are using new directors in exciting and challenging material. Our Summer Repertory Festival is like a fringe festival right here in the IE," Marbury said.

The festival includes the dark comedy "Dog Sees God" and the one-act musical "The Last Five Years."

Bert V. Royal's "Dog Sees God: Confessions of a Teenage Blockhead" is an edgy play which contains adult material that may be inappropriate for some audience members.

"The show is an unauthorized parody about the Peanuts gang as teenagers," said director Danny Guerrero.

The Peanuts gang grows up in this reimagining of their story, things aren't so rosy and they begin to deal with serious real-world issues. Subjects that are dealt with include teen drinking and drug use, suicide, and homosexuality, to name a few.

"This show has always been a dream show of mine! I love this show," Guerrero said. "I think the whole concept is brilliant!"

The cast contains a mixture of rookies and veterans to ISC.

"I couldn't have asked for a better cast," Guerrero said. "For some, this is their beginning show though you could hardly tell. Each one brings something special to the table."

Kristopher James directs the second show in the festival, Jason Robert Brown's "The Last Five Years."

"The show centers on a couple who have been together for five years, and is chronologically unique," James said. "For Catherine, we begin at the end of the relationship and work towards the beginning, and for Jamie, it starts at the beginning, and works forward, until, finally, in the middle, they look into each others' eyes for the first time as they marry. Anyone who has ever experienced the ups and downs of relationships will be able to identify."

James wanted to direct the piece because it involved a small cast and provided an experience for both himself and the actors.

"We were able to grow within the theater as artists," James said. "I have an amazing and wonderful cast. Kristina Rasband, who plays Catherine, has such a beautiful voice. She has really been able to capture the very essence of the character that I was hoping for. I wanted to make sure that the complexity of her character showed through, and Kristina has more than delivered."

According to James, Winston Peacock is also doing an amazing job as Jamie.

"He has really been able to identify with the character, and is really bringing him to life," James said. "Although I have quite a young cast, they are really giving these characters the depth that is so very needed to bring this musical to life on the stage."

When James cast the show, he made it very clear to both of the actors that he didn't want this to be a show about how wonderful they were as singers.

"I knew both of them coming in had wonderful voices," James said. "I told them I was not interested in their technical skills, but was very interested in them being able to connect to the songs on a very personal and soulful level. And I believe we have accomplished that."

Along with the Festival, ISC is introducing their new "Pay What You Will Thursdays."

"We suggest a \$5 entrance donation, but it's really for folks that might not ordinarily be able to pay our regular \$15 ticket price. You can buy a tickets to both shows in advance for \$20. So, there are deals," Marbury said.

On Saturday, July 23, Inland Stage will be holding auditions for the first few shows of the 2011-2012 season, starting at 11 a.m.

"All auditionees will be seen by the directors of Inland Stage's 2011-12 Season and our 2011-12 Outreach and Fundraising shows," Marbury said.

The season includes (in order) "The Great American Trailer Park Musical," "The Crucible," "Every Christmas Story Ever Told," "Rocky Horror," "Othello," "The Importance of Being Earnest," and "A Piece of My Heart."

"We operate as an acting company, but we do hold open auditions throughout the year," Marbury said. "Our next round of open auditions will be in November, then another round in January, however casting occurs throughout the year, so it's a good idea to audition early."

Tickets for the Summer Repertory Festival can be purchased over the phone at the Inland Stage's Box Office (951) 600-7273 Ext.100 or online at <http://www.inlandstage.org/tix.html>.

Visit www.inlandstage.org for details, as well as info about ISC's 2011-2012 season.