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FOR INFORMATION:
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SHOTGUN PLAYERS PRESENT

The Three Musketeers

BY ALEXANDRE DUMAS
ADAPTED BY JOANIE McBRIEN WITH DAVE GARRETT
DIRECTED BY JOANIE McBRIEN
FIGHT DIRECTION BY DAVE MAIER

BERKELEY— Is it justice? Is it comedy? Is it outright revenge? Shotgun Players celebrates its eleventh year of free summer theatre with a new adaptation of *The Three Musketeers*. Come experience the thrills of swordplay, the tremors of first love, and the cruel hand of betrayal in beautiful John Hinkel Park. *The Three Musketeers* opens **Saturday, July 28, and runs Saturdays and Sundays at 4pm at John Hinkel Park in Berkeley.**

The Three Musketeers is a story that most people assume they know. But under the surface of this memorable tale, there are many unexpected layers of intrigue and infamy. There have been several films and stage adaptations depicting the swashbuckling adventures of D'Artagnan and The Three Inseparables, yet when one reads Dumas' original novel we find not only heroic exploits but also explorations of loyalty, honor, and deception. Beneath the broad strokes, Dumas tackles a more subtle theme: the fickle nature of the human heart.

The Three Musketeers is a coming of age story about the young D'Artagnan, who travels from Gascony in the South of France seeking to join the illustrious King's Musketeers in Paris. Along the way he loses his heart to the young Constance Bonacieux. Yet it is the seductive Milady deWinter who is at the center of many intrigues in the story. In the second half of the novel the focus of the tale is upon Milady deWinter, yet in many adaptations she is relegated to a minor role. Shotgun company member Joanie McBrien became interested in exploring the challenges faced by the women in the play and her adaptation gives a broader perspective on both the heroes and villains. The Three Inseparables are not without flaws; D'Artagnan makes rash choices in affairs of the heart, and Milady deWinter is far more than a voluptuous villainess. Dumas crafts each character so that no one is wholly good or wholly evil. Shotgun Players intent in creating our own version of the tale is to capture the adventure, style but also the deeper layers present in the novel.

Another plotline that has often been glossed over is the political tension between Cardinal Richelieu, King Louis XIII and the Huegenots at LaRochele. The Musketeers are in fact soldiers, and the Shotgun version of *The Three Musketeers* will incorporate more geo-political elements from the world of the novel. Expect rebels to convince you to join them against the Cardinal! The Three Inseparables – as in the novel – will make some startling choices upon the battlefield.

At the end of the tale, D'Artagnan and the Musketeers hold a mock trial of Milady deWinter. Is it justice or outright revenge? Shotgun Players desire is for the audience to experience all the thrills of adventure, the passions of romance but also to leave the beauty of John Hinkel Park with questions about loyalty, honor, and if there is indeed a difference between justice and revenge. If there is, who gets to decide?

Since March, the cast has been training with Fight Director Dave Maier in preparation for this production. Mr. Maier is an award-winning Fight Director whose work has been featured at A.C.T., Berkeley Rep, California Shakespeare Theater and Shotgun Players among others.

Shotgun Players cast of *The Three Musketeers* features Shotgun Company members Dan Bruno (*The Forest War, Love is a Dream House in Lorin*), Eric Burns (*Love is a Dream House in Lorin, The Just, Dog Act*), Fontana Butterfield (*The Forest War, King Lear, Quills*), Dave Maier as Athos (*Dog Act, Cyrano deBergerac, King Lear*), and Andrea Weber (*Arabian Night*). Other featured actors include: Carson Creecy, Meghan Doyle, Jim Hiser, Marissa Keltie, Dennis McIntyre, Ryan Montgomery, Carla Pantoja, and Gabe Weiss. Chris Broderick will perform an original score of his own creation on various wind instruments. Costumes designed by Janice Koprowski. Set Designed by Joel Franquist.

CALENDAR LISTING

WHAT: Is it justice? Is it comedy? Is it outright revenge? Shotgun Players celebrate its eleventh year of free summer theatre with a new adaptation of *The Three Musketeers*. Come experience the thrills of swordplay, the tremors of first love, and the cruel hand of betrayal in beautiful John Hinkel Park.

WHEN: The Three Musketeers previews July 21 & 22, opens on Saturday, July 28, and runs Saturdays and Sundays at John Hinkel Park in Berkeley. There will be a special Labor Day Performance on Monday September 3. All Performances at 4PM.

WHERE: John Hinkel Park, Southampton Avenue, Berkeley. (Off The Arlington)

TICKET PRICES: FREE ADMISSION

For more information go to www.shotgunplayers.org or call 510.841.6500

For press photos, please download images from our website, or contact **Liz Lisle** at liz@shotgunplayers.org, or (510) 841-6500 x302