

**IN SHORT:** Bard on the Beach Shakespeare Festival launches its 28th season with [Much Ado About Nothing](#). Always a favourite, this production transports the audience to the glamorous movie soundstages of late 1950s Italy. Directed by Bard veteran **John Murphy**, this high-spirited romantic comedy runs from **June 1 to September 23** on the BMO Mainstage in Vanier Park. Tickets: **604-739-0559** or [bardonthebeach.org](http://bardonthebeach.org).

## CAN LOVE CONQUER ALL? *MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING* OPENS THE 28<sup>TH</sup> SEASON OF BARD ON THE BEACH

**IN FULL:** [Bard on the Beach Shakespeare Festival](#) launches its 28<sup>th</sup> season with [Much Ado About Nothing](#). Set in 1950s Italy, this family-friendly production of one of Shakespeare's most popular plays simply bubbles over with humour, glamour and romantic tension. Directed by **John Murphy**, the high-spirited and stylish show runs from **June 1 to September 23** on the BMO Mainstage; Opening Night is **June 15**.

**THE STORY:** It's Italy in 1959, and a group of actors and filmmakers are celebrating the wrap of their latest movie. Leonato (**Andrew Wheeler**), the head of a film studio, gets word that Don Pedro (**Ian Butcher**), the great film director, is on his way. Leonato's niece Beatrice (**Amber Lewis**) inquires whether famous actor Benedick (**Kevin Macdonald**) is also coming. The two stars are notorious for their ongoing battle of wits. Don Pedro arrives with Benedick and Claudio (**Julien Galipeau**), an up-and-coming actor. Leonato then invites everyone to vacation at his villa, including Don Pedro's sister, Dona Johnna (**Laara Sadiq**). Claudio confesses to Benedick and Don Pedro that he's in love with Hero (**Parmiss Sehat**), Leonato's daughter. The director offers to help woo her on Claudio's behalf; he wins her love for Claudio and a wedding date is set. But Hero and Claudio's marriage plans are almost ruined by the mean-spirited Dona Johnna, and *la dolce vita* is in danger of becoming not so sweet after all. Don Pedro also conspires to bring Benedick and Beatrice together, with hilarious consequences. **David M. Adams, Lois Anderson** (June 1 – August 6), **Chris Cochran, Austin Eckert, Ben Elliott, Jennifer Lines** (August 8 – September 23), **Sereana Malani, Ashley O'Connell** and **Kaitlin Williams** round out this magnificent cast as the play asks the eternal question: *Can love really conquer all?*

This extravagant re-imagining is directed by **John Murphy**, returning to the Festival for his eighth season. Scenery Designer and Bard Artistic Associate **Pam Johnson** highlights the excitement and energy of making films during Federico Fellini's time, turning the stage into a sound studio with the aid of Lighting Designer **Gerald King** and Projection Designer **Corwin Ferguson**. Costume Designer **Christine Reimer**'s glamorous creations are inspired by the sizzling style of '50s screen sirens Sophia Loren and Anita Ekberg. Sound Designer **Murray Price** has crafted a quirky musical soundscape of Italian folk, jazz and a touch of rock 'n' roll, with Choreographer **Tara Cheyenne Friedenber**g using cha cha and tango to add spice to the performers' movement and dance elements.

The heart of [Much Ado About Nothing](#)'s enduring appeal is the relationship between Beatrice and Benedick, one of Shakespeare's most intriguing and attractive couples. The play was last staged at Bard in 2010; it featured Jennifer Lines and John Murphy as the two lovers.

Performance details for [Much Ado About Nothing](#) are as follows:

- **Previews:** June 1, 10, 11, 13 & 14; **OPENS:** Thursday, June 15 at 7:30pm.
- Runs June 1 to September 23 on the BMO Mainstage in Vanier Park.
- Plays in repertory with [The Winter's Tale](#), which begins previews on June 8.
- **Bard-B-Q & Fireworks:** July 29; August 2 & 5. Includes dinner, entertainment from the Dowco Triumph Street Pipe Band and a private view of the *Celebration of Light* Fireworks (5pm start time).
- **Talkback Tuesdays:** Begin July 4 (BMO Mainstage) & July 18 (Howard Family Stage) – Q&A session with members of the cast following select Tuesday evening performances.
- **Family Nights:** July 11, August 8 & 22 - Make lasting memories with a trip to *Much Ado About Nothing*. Arrive at the Village early for family-friendly activities including the PIXSTAR Photobooth, the Emelle's food truck and an exclusive pre-show Theatre talk designed just for kids.
- **Wine Wednesdays:** July 19; August 9 & 23; September 6 (Bard Marquee) - Intimate pre-show wine tasting events (6pm start time).

Tickets for Bard on the Beach's 28th season are now on sale. Ticket prices for 2017 begin at **\$21**. Early booking is recommended for best seat selection as many performances sell out in advance. The full performance schedule, site information and play and special events details are on the Bard website at [bardonthebeach.org](http://bardonthebeach.org). To book tickets, [order online](#) through the Bard website or call the Bard Box Office at **604-739-0559** or (toll free) **1-877-739-0559**.

Bard on the Beach gratefully acknowledges the [sponsors](#) who support the season, including the 2017 Season Sponsor, Goldcorp; Production Sponsors RE/MAX, Visual College of Art and Design of Vancouver, Lonetree Cider and BlueShore Financial; Media Sponsors Global BC and the Vancouver Sun, as well as other valued sponsors and partners. Bard also thanks the City of Vancouver Cultural Services Department, the Vancouver Foundation, the B.C. Arts Council, the Province of B.C. and the Canada Council for the Arts for their continued support.

### **About Bard on the Beach Shakespeare Festival**

Bard on the Beach is one of Canada's largest not-for-profit, professional Shakespeare festivals. Established in 1990, Bard is an annual summer festival with a mission to perform, explore and celebrate the genius of William Shakespeare, surrounded by the natural beauty of Vancouver, British Columbia. Play performances run [Tuesday through Sunday](#) with matinees on select weekends and weekdays and a range of special events on Monday evenings. All evening performances start at 7:30pm.

2017 advance photography is now available on the [Bard website](#).

Please contact Cynnamon Schreinert for password access or to arrange interviews.

Tel: 604-802-2733; email: [cynnamon@hartleypr.com](mailto:cynnamon@hartleypr.com)

If you would like to no longer receive emails from HartleyPR please unsubscribe [here](#).