

For Immediate Release

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# **SHAKESPEARE AT THE RANCH**

## **THEATREWORKS' *THE MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR***

### **5-28 August at Rock Ledge Ranch**

Welcome to Windsor, Colorado, pop. 30. It's a small tent city located at Rock Ledge Ranch, out there by the Garden of the Gods. Nice people, mostly. Some of them a little odd, some pretty regular. There's a well known fellow by the name of Sir John Falstaff who's come to town thinking he'll seduce some attractive married women. There's a Welsh schoolmaster who wants to have it out with the French doctor. There's an adorable young maid by the name of Anne, with a bevy of suitors, one favored by mom, another by dad, and another by Anne herself. And there's one extremely jealous husband, who's convinced his wife is betraying him with a fat old knight. There are lots of kids who sing and like to dress up as fairies and pinch people. It's a very lively place, Windsor. You wouldn't expect anything else from a village created by William Shakespeare.

*The Merry Wives of Windsor* has always been one of Shakespeare's most popular plays, and in returning to the great outdoors this summer, THEATREWORKS is responding to tradition and to popular demand. The festival played for 20 years in the city parks before picking up stakes and settling down in the Dusty Loo Bon Vivant Theater. "The Bon Vivant" was irresistible," says Murray Ross, "THEATREWORKS artistic director--- it's such an attractive and flexible playing space, and a very protected and reliable one too." But after seven years of indoor Shakespeare, the company felt there was something missing: the great outdoors. "The winds can blow, the rain can come down, you can get hammered by hail, flooded by monsoons and threatened by lightning" Ross says, "but the truth is there's something about Shakespeare that belongs outdoors on a summer night. There's nothing like it."

So this summer THEATREWORKS returns Shakespeare to the park---but not just any park. *The Merry Wives of Windsor* will play in the custom festival tent set up on the

meadow at Rock Ledge Ranch. Ross says, “it’s by far the most beautiful setting we’ve ever had for Shakespeare---quiet, convenient, the parking is plentiful, it’s secluded, it has a pond, and it is beautiful.” The site is especially appropriate for this summer’s production, since director Kevin Landis is setting the play as if it took place in Colorado Springs in the first decade of the twentieth century. The historically preserved Rock Ledge Ranch provides the perfect location for the village, transplanted from sixteenth century England to turn of the century Colorado (with all of Shakespeare’s language surviving completely intact). Audiences will be treated to more than a play—they will find themselves immersed in a delightful world, both in and outside of the tent at Rock Ledge Ranch. There will be musicians, minstrels, jugglers, and clowns on the meadow—audiences are invited to picnic first on the beautiful grounds and then see the show, which begins at 7:30, just about sundown.

THEATREWORKS has assembled a stellar cast to light up this village. Robert Rais, widely and justly regarded as the funniest man in town, will jump into a fat suit and chase good looking women in the role of Sir John Falstaff. He will not, however, score; instead he will find himself repeatedly humiliated by two merry wives, played by Amy Brooks and Kara Whitney. Khris Lewin, well known here for his award winning performances as the dashing Cyrano and the haunted prince of Denmark, returns to play the madly jealous husband, Master Ford. Tom Paradise plays a the volatile French doctor, Michael Preston the very self- satisfied parson, and Leah Chandler Mills is Mistress Quickly, so much more than a lusty tavern wench.

Tonya Moake will light up the tent, and some of the surrounding meadows and woods. Roy Ballard is the set designer and Sarah Shaver outfits the village. The director is Kevin Landis.

*The Merry Wives of Windsor* plays nightly Tuesdays through Saturdays at 7:30 August 5-28. There are no performances on Sunday and Monday evenings. General Admission reserved seating is \$15, with a portion of the proceeds benefiting Rock Ledge Ranch. For tickets and further information, go to [www.theatreworksCS.org](http://www.theatreworksCS.org) or call the THEATREWORKS box office at (719) 255-3232.

Notes for editors:

The full cast is: Robert Rais, Amy Brooks, Kara Whitney, Kris Lewin, Tom Paradise, Leah Chandler Mills, AND A LOT OF OTHER PEOPLE! The production is directed by Kevin Landis and designed by Roy Ballard, with lighting by Tonya Moake, and costumes by Sarah Shaver.

For information and tickets about THEATREWORKS please visit [www.theatreworksCS.org](http://www.theatreworksCS.org).

For directions to Rock Ledge Ranch please visit [www.rockledgeranch.com/location](http://www.rockledgeranch.com/location)

## Associated Events

- **August 5, Thursday** If you work in the theatre in Colorado Springs, you'll a very special ticket price and a party.
- **August 7, Saturday** Come for the show and stay for the party after the show.
- **August 14, Saturday** Dr. Rebecca LaRoche-Prologue Series. Merry Wives in the Garden: Shakespeare and Midsummer Revels. 6:00 pm, Rock Ledge. Insights from the UCCS English department chair surrounded by the beauty of Rock Ledge Ranch.
- **August 15, Sunday**-Shakespeare in the Garden at ForestEdge  
**ONE PERFORMANCE ONLY**  
6:00 pm, ForestEdge, the private gardens of Tim and Laura Spear  
\$65-only 50 tickets available  
Join Falstaff, Quickly, Ford and all the other Garter Inn regulars as we take Merry Wives from Windsor Forest to ForestEdge. Laura and Tim Spear have done Windsor, England one better in their magnificent garden in the Black Forest. Come sip wine amongst the peonies, linger in the aspen groves and join the Merry Wives of Winsdor for an evening of spellbinding enchantment. A spellbinding evening, and limited to the first 50 guests who make their reservations. Price includes a fantastic picnic dinner a generous supply of wine

## FACT SHEET

### ***THE MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR***

**By William Shakespeare**

**WHEN/WHERE:** The Rock Ledge Ranch at Garden of the Gods  
The Festival Tent in the Meadow  
3105 Gateway Road  
Colorado Springs, CO 80904  
719.255.3232  
[www.theatreworksCS.org](http://www.theatreworksCS.org)

August 5 - 28  
Tuesday - Saturday at 7:30 p.m.

**RUNNING TIME** 2 hours and 40 minutes with one 20 minute intermission

**TICKETS:** \$10 - \$30

**Reserved Tickets:**

Single Tickets \$30

Children 16 and under \$15

Friends and Family Pack x4 Tickets for \$50

**Same Day & Rush Tickets:**

General Admission \$10

Present your Rock Ledge Day Ticket \$5 (through August 14)

Rock Ledge Ranch Members \$5

It-Takes 5 \$5

Children under 5 will not be admitted.

For more information call the THEATREWORKS Box Office at (719) 255-3232  
or e-mail: [tickets@uccs.edu](mailto:tickets@uccs.edu)

Reservations online at [www.theatreworksCS.org](http://www.theatreworksCS.org)