

There's a brand new professional theatre company in Polk County. Rogue Stage is a non-traditional theatre company that operates outside of a brick-and-mortar building and seeks to bring immersive, interactive and challenging theatre to a new audience.

Based in Lakeland, Florida, Rogue Stage exists to produce original works, unique concepts, and unexpected theatrical experiences that will engage the Polk County community.

After a over a decade of creating art throughout Central Florida as actors, directors, writers and producers, four veterans of the theatre community decided to come to come together and create a site-specific company of their own. That means that Rogue Stage will present plays and theatrical experiences in different spaces: places where theatre doesn't usually happen.

Thom Mesrobian is the Producing Director. He is known for his work in Polk County with Theatre Winter Haven, Lakeland Community Theatre and Lake Wales Little Theatre as well as 11 years of working as a professional actor in Orlando and Tampa. Mesrobian along with his wife Tonya, who serves as Managing Director of Rogue Stage, are the team who received critical acclaim at the Orlando International Fringe Festival in 2016 with "Simpleton: The Legend of President Trump" (A Hamilton parody) as well as the original "FrankenChrist: The Musical" in 2014.

The Mesrobians' longtime friend and collaborator Mark Hartfield directed both of those projects for the Fringe Festival as well as Mesrobian's play "Callbacks" which won Best of the Fest at the Tampa Fringe. Mr. Hartfield brings decades of experience to the table as Artistic Director of Rogue Stage. He was the General Manager of Theatre Winter Haven, a show director at Universal Studios, Orlando and now is the head of the theatre program at Polk State College.

Completing the team is the accomplished actress and playwright, Karissa Barber who serves as Marketing and Development Director for Rogue. In addition to writing and producing the play "Masterwork" in 2017, Karissa has been a fixture on the stages of Polk County, Orlando and Tampa for years. She brings all her abilities as a photographer and graphic artist as well as a strong social media following as "The Acting Mom" to bear as

she helps create and disseminate the mission and identity of Rogue Stage to the public.

The company's first project is a special one. Written by Martin Dockery, a staple of the Edinburgh Fringe Festival, The Canadian Fringe Circuit and the Orlando Fringe Festival, with dramaturgy by Vanessa Quesnelle, "Moonlight After Midnight" sees love, loss, memory and mystery intertwine when a beautiful woman and a secretive man enact scenes from a relationship in the private theater of a midnight hotel room.

Among the play's many accolades are winner of Best Show at the Orlando Fringe and the Cincinnati Fringe, Best Theatre Award at the Adelaide Fringe and Best Original Work at the Ottawa Fringe. The Winnipeg Free Press says "5 Stars! This elegantly written show turns and turns on itself like a kaleidoscope." And the The Capital Critics Circle in Ottawa says "This play is everything I've ever wanted out of theatre."

This production marks the first time that anyone, anywhere in the world besides Mr. Dockery and Ms. Quesnelle's company Concrete Drops, has produced one of their works and we at Rogue Stage are thrilled beyond belief to bring this event to Polk County audiences.

The show is one hour in length and will take place on two nights October 27th and 28th, 2017 at the Ridge Art Gallery inside the Theatre Winter Haven Complex, 201 Cypress Gardens Blvd. It is a small, intimate venue with only 50 seats available each night and tickets are expected to sell quickly. Advance tickets are \$15 for adults; \$10 with any student I.D. and are available at roquestage.com. Tickets at the door will be \$20

"Moonlight After Midnight" will also be presented November 2nd at Lkld Live at 202 N. Massachusetts Ave in Lakeland. Tickets are also available on the website for the same prices.

Join us as we kick off Rogue Stage with a night of theatre, special giveaways of Rogue Stage Merchandise as well as a chance to win gift cards from Cobb & Pen, Moxie Salon, Eyeglass World, Master Etch and more as well as the opportunity for you to become part of our Rogue Stage movement. We invite our entire community to go Rogue...together.

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