Shrek the Musical/WKU Theatre

VFTH

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An iconic outdoor theatre here in Kentucky is bursting with WKU talent this summer.

Amy Bingham travelled to Bardstown for this week’s View from the Hill.

Chances are you’ve heard of the Stephen Foster Story. It’s been performed in Bardstown since 1958. A more modern musical has been added to the line-up this summer and WKU has a big presence in both productions.

 “Shrek the musical has been one of the most rewarding experiences for me as a director.”

The costumes, the make-up, the jokes! Shrek the musical is quite a departure from the traditional Stephen Foster story.

 “The fact that a place like Stephen Foster in Bardstown Kentucky can put on a play of this magnitude and have the response we’ve had is mind blowing.”

For Billy Bass, a 2009 WKU graduate, landing the lead role was also mind blowing.

 “You’re playing this iconic character you wouldn’t think would ever be possible.”

But Billy’s not the only WKU talent working in Bardstown this summer. More than a half dozen former and current musical theater students have roles in both Shrek and the Stephen Foster Story.

39:45 “This is one of the most highly stocked years with Western students that I can recall.”

WKU Senior Jillian Weinzapfel, says she felt prepared for her role as a featured dancer in the shows.

 “Western has been a wonderful school to go to because we have a lot of dancing that has been intensive enough that I can dance readily here.”

Bass says there’s no way to put a price tag on the invaluable experience he gained during his time on the hill.

 “At Western you come as you are and we try to make you better as you are, not trying to fit you to a specific mold to send you out in the world where there’s 100 other people that are like that.”

 “I wouldn’t be where I am today if I didn’t go to Western.”

By the way, the lead actor in the Stephen Foster Story is also a WKU Alum, Bronson Norris Murphy. The current season will end August tenth. For tickets log onto stephenfoster.com.

With this week’s View from the Hill, I’m Amy Bingham.

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