

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



**Village Theatre to Stage Modern Adaptation of a Beloved Classic,  
*Sense and Sensibility***

**Announcing the Cast and Creative Team**

Adapted for the Stage by Kate Hamill

Based on the Novel by Jane Austen

Directed by Jes Spencer

**ISSAQUAH, WA** (January 26, 2023) – Village Theatre today announced the cast and creative team for its production of a modern adaptation of the classic romantic comedy, *Sense and Sensibility*. Layered with smart comedy and zany antics, this playful new adaption comes to life at Village Theatre in a delightfully indulgent production. *Sense and Sensibility* will run in **Issaquah from February 1 – March 12, 2023**, and in **Everett from March 17 – April 9, 2023**. Single tickets can be purchased now through Village Theatre’s Box Office in-person in Issaquah (303 Front Street, Issaquah) or Everett (2710 Wetmore Ave, Everett), by phone at (425) 392-2202, or online at [VillageTheatre.org](http://VillageTheatre.org).

In this centuries-old story that still resonates today, sisters Elinor and Marianne’s fortunes become misfortunes after their father’s sudden death leaves them financially destitute and socially vulnerable. Navigating societal pressures and relatable modern gossip, the two young women learn to love while expressing their own sensibilities.

Written by award-winning playwright Kate Hamill, this adaptation flirts between historical period piece and modern day rom-com, updating the story for today’s audiences in a way that honors its original source material. Director Jes Spencer folds in additional whimsy such as cell phones, a contemporary underscore of popular pop songs, and fantastical settings to highlight anachronistic elements that bridge modern perspectives with this classic story.

“When I initially read Kate Hamill’s adaptation, I was very drawn to the ‘gossip’ ensemble’s comments on the characters – and specifically how they spoke about the women – throughout the play; their commentary felt like a direct comparison to today’s social media and cancel culture,” said Director Jes Spencer. “I was also looking to create a world where the women could be free to express the full pendulum of emotions, even when stuck within the social structures of the Regency world. It became clear very quickly that we had an opportunity to build a bridge connecting historical costume drama and contemporary romantic comedy. This has translated into a world where a watercolor landscape meets a disco ball chandelier. I’m really hoping that Austen lovers see themselves within the story of Elinor and Marianne, and folks that are new to story will fall in love the Dashwood women.”

Village Theatre’s *Sense and Sensibility* cast features **Lindsay Welliver** (ACT Theatre, Seattle Shakespeare Company, Book-It Repertory Theatre, Taproot Theatre Company, Strawberry Theatre Workshop, Seattle

Public Theater, and Theatre22) and **Alegra Batara** (Repertory Theatre of St. Louis, Festival 56, and TheaterWorksUSA) as sisters Elinor and Marianne Dashwood respectively, both in their debut roles at Village Theatre; **Josh Kenji** as John Willoughby/Lady Middleton/Gossip (Seattle Rep, ACT Theatre, The 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue Theatre, Strawberry Theatre Workshop, Sound Theatre Company, and others); **Nick DeSantis** as Sir John Middleton/Mrs. Ferrars/Thomas/Gossip (Village Theatre, ACT Theatre, and ArtsWest); **Jonelle Jordan** as Fanny Dashwood/Lady Middleton/Doctor/Gossip (Village Theatre, Seattle Shakespeare Company, Seattle Public Theater, and ACT Theatre); **Sunam Ellis** as Mrs. Dashwood/Anne Steele/Gossip (Seattle Rep, ACT Theatre, Book-It Repertory, Seattle Shakespeare Company, Seattle Public Theater, Sound Theatre, Theatre22, ArtsWest, and The Seagull Project); **Sophia Franzella** as Margaret Dashwood/Lucy Steele/Gossip (Village Theatre, Taproot Theatre Company, and Pony World Theatre); **Suzy Hunt** as Mrs. Jennings/Gossip (Village Theatre, ACT Theatre, Empty Space Theatre, ArtsWest, and Off Broadway); **Richard Nguyen Sloniker** as Colonel Brandon/John Dashwood/Gossip (Village Theatre, The Guthrie Theater, ACT Theatre, Seattle Rep and Seattle Children's Theatre); and **Calder Shilling** as Edward/Robert Ferrars/Lady Middleton/Gossip (Taproot Theater Company and Wooden O).

Understudies include **Shanna Allman** (Elinor/Fanny/Lady Middleton/Doctor); **Cheyenne Barton** (Marianne/Margaret/Lucy/Gossip); **Nik Doner** (Colonel Brandon/John Dashwood/John Middleton/Mrs. Ferrars/Thomas/Gossip); **Michael Wu** (Edward Ferrars/John Willoughby/Lady Middleton/Robert Ferrars/Gossip); and **Annie Yim** (Mrs. Dashwood/Anne Steel /Mrs. Jennings/Gossip).

The creative team features Director Jes Spencer; Choreographer Kathryn Van Meter; Scenic Designer Parmida Ziaei; Wig Designer Kaleena Jordan; Costume Designer Danielle Nieves; Lighting Designer Amiya Brown; Sound Designer Tosin Olufolabi; and Stage Manager Shay Trusty.

#### **ABOUT JES SPENCER (Director)**

Spencer is a Seattle-based director, parent, and dedicated reader of romantic comedies. She has been the Casting Director at Village Theatre since 2014, with *Sense and Sensibility* marking her directorial debut. Locally, she's collaborated on shows at Village Theatre, Showtunes!, ArtsWest, SecondStory Rep, and Taproot Theatre Company.

#### **ABOUT VILLAGE THEATRE**

Based in Issaquah, WA, with operations in Everett, WA, Village Theatre is a leading producer of musical theatre in the Pacific Northwest. Producing entertaining, quality productions since 1979, Village Theatre has grown into one of the region's best-attended theatres. Through its Village Originals program, Village Theatre is nationally recognized for its contribution to the development of new musicals, having supported the creation of over 180 new works to date. Village Theatre also takes pride in nurturing tomorrow's audiences through its Youth Education programs, serving thousands of young people and their families annually.

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#### **FOR EDITORS/PRODUCERS**

WHAT: *Sense and Sensibility*

by Kate Hamill, based on the novel by Jane Austen

Directed by Jes Spencer

Village Theatre brings Jane Austen's 18<sup>th</sup>-century romance to life with this gorgeous theatrical adaptation of *Sense and Sensibility*. The timeless tale of one's search for love, balance, and happiness still touches audiences today as it did when it was first written. It asks the question, "How do you find true love in a world that seems obsessed with wealth and social status?" Join the Dashwood sisters on their journey as you delight in this visually vibrant production on the Village Theatre stage!

**WHERE:**

**Village Theatre**

Francis J. Gaudette Theatre  
303 Front Street N, Issaquah

Everett Performing Arts Center (EPAC)  
2710 Wetmore Avenue, Everett

**WHEN:**

**February 1, 2023 - April 9, 2023**

Issaquah – February 1 – March 12, 2023

Everett – March 17 – April 9, 2023

Select Wednesdays - 7:30 p.m.

Thursdays\* - 1:00 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.

Fridays - 8:00 p.m.

Saturdays - 1:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m.

Sundays\* - 1:00 p.m.

\*Select Thursdays and Sundays at 7:00 p.m.

**TICKETS:**

**Start at \$33 - ON SALE NOW**

For tickets and information >> [VillageTheatre.org/Sense](https://VillageTheatre.org/Sense)

**CONNECT WITH VILLAGE THEATRE**

***VillageTheatre.org***

Facebook - /VillageTheatre

Instagram - @village\_theatre

YouTube - /villagetheatre1

#VTSenseAndSensibility

## **PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEO**

For available photography and video, please visit Village Theatre's online [press room here >>](#)

## **VILLAGE THEATRE'S COVID SAFETY PLAN**

For Village Theatre's most up-to-date COVID safety protocols, [please visit Village Theatre online here >>](#)

## **FOR MORE INFORMATION**

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