



For Immediate Release

Monday, January 30, 2017

Walterdale Theatre Associates cancels production of *Othello*.

It is with deep regret that Walterdale Theatre Associates announces the cancellation of *Othello*, the third show of its 2016-2017 season. *Othello* was due to open on February 8, 2017. Patrons can e-mail walterdalefoh@gmail.com for ticketing information.

“This is a heart-breaking decision, but as a community of volunteers and artists, we can’t continue with a production where the safety of members of our cast has been threatened,” said Adam Kuss, President of the Board of Directors of Walterdale Theatre.

Both online and in-person threats were received by members of the production from people who were angered by Walterdale’s decision to cast a white female in the role of Othello, traditionally a role filled by a person of colour. The matter has been referred to police.

“Other members of the theatre community expressed their concern to us as well,” said Anne Marie Szucs, Artistic Director of Walterdale and Director of *Othello*. “We understand and appreciate those concerns. The vision we were presenting for this 400-year-old play was a post-apocalyptic world where traditional power structures were inverted and where the focus was on the battle between the sexes. We’re sorry this caused offence. We will continue to build on the respectful interactions we’ve had with community members on this topic, and continue to engage with and welcome any groups or individuals who want to get involved in our productions.”

Walterdale Theatre is a volunteer-run community theatre that has operated in Edmonton since 1958, and offers opportunities for people from all backgrounds a chance to engage in live theatre. Walterdale casts plays based on an open audition process which welcomes everyone, and roles are filled by those who attend the auditions for each play. Decisions about the artistic vision of each production are the responsibility of the Director, the Artistic Director and the Board of Directors of the theatre.

For more information please contact:
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