



Peter Tam was invited, along with his quartet, to be part of the upcoming outdoor theatrical production of *As You Like It* – performing a mix of 1920s music before and during the show. (Special to The News)

Quartet brings 1920s live music to Bard on the Bandstand

Maple Ridge musician adds swing to Emerald Pig production of *As You Like It*

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In keeping with the speakeasy era theme of this year's Bard on the Bandstand, a Maple Ridge musician has been asked to incorporate some live Roaring '20s music before and during the shows.

Each year, the Emerald Pig Theatrical Society brings one of William Shakespeare's productions to life on the outdoor stages at both Pitt Meadows Spirit Square and Maple Ridge's Memorial Peace Park. This year, they're presenting one of the Bard's most hilarious romantic comedies, *As You Like It*, set in 1920s.

RECENT: Maple Ridge theatrical group serves up As You Like It for this summer's Bard

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The 1920s were an era full of “wonderful music and dance – a gilded age so to speak,” said **Emerald Pig** president and show director Simon Challenger.

He wanted to capture some of that in the production and having musicians on stage with the actors would provide the kind of atmosphere that he said “taped music just can’t match.”

That’s when he decided to approach Peter Tam and invited Maple Ridge musician and his quartet to be part of the show.

Tam, a local singer, songwriter and pianist, will be joined by Eduardo De La Vega on drums, Kyle Windjack on upright bass, and Jennifer De La Vega on trumpet. They will be

performing originals and swing jazz for the pre-show, and will be part of the live music for the Charleston dances during the show.

“The group will play music in the scenes as a part of the play for three dance routines and 30 minutes of music of the same theme before the show starts – to get the audience in the mood,” Tam said.

“My shows are out of town or on the Island, so this will be a great opportunity for neighbours and friends to come see my quartet and enjoy my live music,” he suggested.

Challenger has known Tam for quite a few years, noting he’s been involved in the shows before – but always as a solo artist.

“When I approached him with this idea, he jumped at the chance and began putting his musicians together. We can’t wait for opening night,” Challenger added.

“We’re grateful that Peter was able to put together his quartet and bring the music to life, especially with the dance choreography providing such great energy and visual spectacle,” said the director.

“The music simply drives everything. With the magic of live theatre, we will transport our audiences back to the Roaring ’20s, where they can live in that moment and forget about everything else for a while.”

ALSO: Maple Ridge musician holding free concert in benefit of Salvation Army

The Emerald Pig Society's production of As You Like It runs July 14 to 16 at Pitt Meadows Spirit Square, and July 21 to 23 on the bandstand in Memorial Peace Park in Maple Ridge.

Admission is free.

Tam's pre-show begins at 6:30 p.m.

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