



PRESS RELEASE

PHAME Academy Begins Rehearsals for Collaborative Rock Opera

June 25, 2019

Rehearsals have begun for PHAME's collaborative rock opera, on stage this August at the Hampton Opera Center. More than thirty adults with developmental disabilities have been cast in leading and supporting roles, including five lead characters, a movement chorus, an ensemble of musicians playing iPads, and a choir. The rock opera was written by eight PHAME students in collaboration with Alexis Hamilton, Portland Opera's Manager of Education and Outreach, and is the first fully staged PHAME production written by people with developmental disabilities.

The rock opera brings to fruition an 18-month collaboration between PHAME Academy and Portland Opera. In addition to lending PHAME the use of their Hampton Opera Center for the production's performances, Portland Opera has taught opera-related classes at PHAME and is providing one-on-one vocal coaching to lead actors. The production also partners with Portland's acclaimed dance duo Wobbly Dance, who will be choreographing the movement chorus, and with Metropolitan Youth Symphony, whose students will join PHAME's iPad musicians in making up the production's orchestra.

A contemporary and original fairy tale, *The Poet's Shadow* tells the story of Elizabeth, a young poet who, in despair following a break up, writes a series of poems that take on a life of their own. In search of resolution, she embarks on a quest that will challenge everything she knows about courage, strength, and love.

The Poet's Shadow features artists with developmental disabilities at every stage of the process, not just writing and performing the opera, but also composing the music, designing the costumes, creating set design elements, and more.

The Poet's Shadow

Seven performances: August 23, 24, 25 (matinee), 28, 29, 30, 31 (matinee)
Hampton Opera Center, 211 Southeast Caruthers Street Portland, OR 97214
Tickets on sale now at www.phamepdx.org/poet



Photo by Friderike Heuer

PHAME Academy is a fine and performing arts academy serving adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. We offer three ten-week terms of arts-based classes each year, as well as many performance opportunities. Taught by talented arts education professionals, our classes include visual art, acting, choir, dance, musical theatre and many more. PHAME is built upon the belief that art is for everyone. We believe that students, artists, teachers, and the greater community can empower themselves through the arts. With that in mind, PHAME brings passion, joy, and rigor to arts education and performance.

Portland Opera is an acclaimed opera company whose mission is to inspire, challenge and uplift its audiences by creating productions of high artistic quality that celebrate the beauty and breadth of opera.

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