INFO SHEET

SOMETHING ROTTEN
Book by John O'Farrell and Karey Kirkpatrick
Music and lyrics by Karey and Wayne Kirkpatrick
Directed by Rory Pelsue

LIBRETTO
Follow the link below for a copy of the libretto:
https://www.jesuitportland.org/uploaded/DRAMA/SR_LIBVB_FINAL.pdf

SYNOPSIS
William Shakespeare is London’s hottest playwright—much to the chagrin of his unsuccessful rival, Nick Bottom. With his marriage on the rocks and his career in jeopardy, Nick needs his next play to be a sure-fire hit, so he pays the Soothsayer Nostradamus to predict the next big money-making trend in theater. Nostradamus divines that the future of theater will involve tap dancing, belting, and jazz hands…and soon enough Nick and his brother Nigel are writing the world’s first musical. But the brothers soon disagree about how to execute this new form. Should they follow Nostradamus’ confounding prediction as closely as possible? Or should they stay true to their own artistic impulses? And when Nigel falls in love with Portia (a young Puritan) and Shakespeare himself tries to steal the Bottoms’ ideas, hilarity, mayhem (and more dancing, belting, and jazz hands) ensue!

DIRECTOR’S NOTE
This production is a love letter to theater, theatricality, and theatrical conventions. We will ask how an English Renaissance Theatrical troupe might perform Something Rotten, and come up with an answer that is as absurd, silly, touching, and witty as this wonderful musical.

CASTING
PLEASE NOTE:
We have listed the gender of each character in the show, but are very interested in casting actors of all gender identities in as wide a spectrum of roles as possible.

All actors should expect to double in the ensemble. The exact size of the ensemble outside of the listed names below is still being determined.

BREAKDOWN OF ROLES
SHAKESPEARE. Male-identified. The brightest star in Elizabethan theater—and he knows it. His Rock Star confidence hides a gnawing fear that his talent doesn’t merit the accolades thrust upon him. Ballsy, sexy, and arrogant; seemingly sure-of-himself, but ultimately insecure.
Vocal range top: Ab4
Vocal range bottom: Ab2
NICK BOTTOM. Male-identified. A struggling writer who resents Shakespeare’s success. Weighed down by his obligations to his younger brother, Nigel, and his wife, Bea, Nick goes to desperate, even amoral lengths to create a hit show. Neurotic, jealous, insecure, deeply loyal, a concrete thinker.
Vocal range top: G4
Vocal range bottom: A2

NIGEL BOTTOM. Male-identified. Nick’s imaginative, and innocent younger brother. Incredibly talented, but unsure of his abilities, Nigel is emboldened when he falls in love with Portia. Sensitive, tender, poetic.
Vocal range top: A4
Vocal range bottom: Eb3

BEA BOTTOM. Female-identified. Nick’s wife. She loves Nick deeply, but is unafraid to call him out on his stubbornness (and sexism). Poverty forces her to dress up like a man to join the Elizabethan work force, but she finds herself liberated rather than constrained by this necessity. Smart, resilient, unflappably positive.
Vocal range top: D5
Vocal range bottom: D3

PORTIA. Female-Identified. A young Puritan woman who loves poetry, theater, and ultimately Nigel. Shy, imaginative, and repressed, Portia’s rebellious and passionate spirit blossoms when she stands up to her father, Brother Jeremiah.
Vocal range top: F#5
Vocal range bottom: G3

NOSTRADAMUS. Male-Identified. Only a semi-talented soothsayer, Nostradamus is a born salesman and showman. Kooky and showy; desperate for cash and approval.

BROTHER JEREMIAH. Male-Identified. Portia's father. A Puritan who thinks theater and literature are sinful. Like most repressed people, Brother Jeremiah is sex-obsessed. The more he tries to control the desires of others, the more his own bubbles up in purple double entendres. Officious, tightly-coiled, constantly-aroused, opaque-to-himself.
Vocal range top: G4
Vocal range bottom: G3


SHYLOCK. Male-Identified. A Jewish investor to whom Nick and Nigel are in debt. An outcast in English society whose greatest love is the theater; being excluded from the art form he loves so deeply gnaws at him. Passionate, witty, driven.
MINSTREL. Our narrator and gateway into the world of *Something Rotten*. An entertainer out to please the audience. Seductive, insouciant, fun.

Vocal range top: A4
Vocal range bottom: C#3

PETER QUINCE. Male-identified. An actor in Nick Bottom’s troupe. Sassy, sarcastic, at his wit’s end.

TOM SNOUT. Male-identified. An actor in Nick Bottom’s troupe. Skeptical of Nigel’s flowery writing and hungry for more accessible scripts.

ROBIN STARVELING. Male-identified. An actor in Nick Bottom’s troupe, Robin plays the female roles in Nick and Nigel’s plays and relishes the (otherwise forbidden) opportunity to dress in drag and flirt with men that his profession allows him.

Other roles include FRANCIS FLUTE and SNUG (other actors in Nick Bottom’s troupe), as well as TOWNSPEOPLE, and various FOLLOWERS of Shakespeare.

VIOLENCE AND INTIMACY

There is little to no stage violence in *SOMETHING ROTTEN*. The romantically involved characters (husband-and-wife Bea and Nick, courting characters Portia and Nigel) will be asked to kiss and embrace. Various characters use sexual innuendo in dialogue, especially Portia, Nigel, and Brother Jeremiah.

If you have questions or concerns about violence or intimacy in the show, please refer to the script, or feel free to contact the director: roryoswaldpelsue@gmail.com

CALLBACK DATES

November 4 & 5 (Evening), November 6 (all day)

REHEARSAL, TECH AND PERFORMANCE DATES

Rehearsals begin November 15-November 23

[Rehearsals Pause November 24-28 for Thanksgiving]

Rehearsals resume November 29-December 4

[Rehearsals Pause December 5-January 2 for Winter Break]

Rehearsals resume January 3

Tech begins January 27
Performances: Thurs Feb 3 (7:30), Fri, February 4(7:30pm), Sat, Feb 5(7:30pm), Sat, Feb 5(2pm), Sun, Feb 6 (2pm), Thurs Feb 10 (7:30), Fri, February 11(7:30pm), Sat, Feb 12 (2pm), Sat, Feb 12(7:30pm), Sun, Feb 13(2pm)