

Published June 10th, 2009

Meet Cal Shakes Managing Director-Susie Falk





Susie Falk at the event on May 28 Photo Andy Scheck

Susie Falk brought her signature big smile to the stage set up in Theater Square to greet the local residents of the city where Cal Shakes Bruns Memorial Amphitheater makes it home. Named Managing Director in February, the Lamorinda weekly spoke with Falk then about her new role within the organization. "Everyone in the arts is daunted by this economy," acknowledged Falk, but as a veteran of the San Francisco and Bay Area arts communities, she seemed confidently optimistic about what lay ahead. "We have a hugely loyal audience and a very supportive board."

Growing in up in a family of theater lovers, as a teenager Falk was both a patron and student of Cal Shakes when the productions were staged at Berkeley's John Hinkel Park. "Participating in theater helped me to navigate those difficult adolescent years," she says. Her self-described linear side led Falk to choose to major in psychology over theater in college. A summer stint in the box office of a theater in the Bershires provided Falk with the revelation that she could combine her practical nature and love of theater into a job in theater administration. Falk had served as Cal Shakes Marketing Director for four years prior to taking on her new role. Prior to that she had worked in public relations at both San Francisco's American Conservatory Theater and the Berkeley Repertory Theater. These days Falk keeps busy with overseeing the business matters of Cal Shakes as Artistic Director Jonathon Moscone's vision permeates the theater, "I enjoy the dynamic partnership [with Moscone] that provides each of us a voice in how things are done," she says.

Early reviews give Cal Shakes opening production of Romeo and Juliet two thumbs up-a nice start to Falk's first season while in charge. Cal Shakes mid-season plays are Private Lives by Noel Coward and Samuel Beckett's Happy Days. "We have

never done Beckett or Coward before," says Falk. "We are always looking for playwrights that can stand up to Shakespeare." The season will return with Shakespeare's fantastical comedy *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

Falk is looking forward to Cal Shakes subscribers and newcomers enjoying the variety of theater to be presented in the 2009 season. "One of the things that I love most about the Cal Shakes experience is seeing multiple generations who come to share a picnic and enjoy the play together."

A. Firth

Reach the reporter at: info@lamorindaweekly.com

Copyright © Lamorinda Weekly, Moraga CA