

## Arts preview: The Trip: ‘Orpheus & Eurydice’

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“Orpheus & Eurydice” is the Columbus debut of new-to-Columbus theater troupe the Trip, co-founded by Ohio State theater professor Tom Dugdale in 2012 in San Diego.

The company’s adaptation starts out on the web via pre-filmed videos before the action shifts onstage at Franklinton’s Strongwater Food & Spirits. The Trip pairs this modern approach with modern themes in a still-faithful adaptation of the classic, tragic tale of lovers victimized by fate.

“We were interested in new [approaches], in original work, but we had a lot of training and background in classical,” Dugdale said.

Audience members familiar with the traditional “Orpheus & Eurydice” tale will recognize the narrative in this update, despite the contemporary setting and an emphasis on technology in the script and the production.

“The wedding, the snake, the underworld ... we follow that plot exactly,” said Dugdale, who wrote, directs and appears in the production as Orpheus.

Pre-filmed scenes that chronicle the couple’s courtship — while also offering a nod to online dating — are available at [thetriptheater.net](http://thetriptheater.net). The interpolation of technology into the production is, Dugdale, said, an experiment in broadening the appeal of theater to an increasingly screen-centric world, but also to allow for an examination of how technology would impact the storyline as set in modern times.

Dugdale said it's not necessary that audience members watch the clips prior to the live performance, but that, obviously, he hopes they do. "It's kind of cool to come into the show feeling like you've already gotten to know the characters," he said.

The live performance, held in the event space at Strongwater Food & Spirits in Franklinton, begins with the couple's wedding reception. (Which is kind of meta, since that's a popular real-life use of the space.) The videos are woven into the backdrop of the set, and there is a cursory bit playing audience-as-guests that also provides an added level of engagement.

Dugdale said the most significant non-tech update of the story is a deeper investigation of Eurydice.

"It always seems to be called the Orpheus myth," Dugdale said, "but we were interested in her story, trying to figure out something about her, to give her a voice. The videos begin to do this, to answer a little bit of 'Who is Eurydice?' [and] to give her some backstory."