



Vol. 6.1

May, 2010

Inside this Issue

Fantastic Mr. Fox Auditions2
 Annual Membership Meeting2
 2010-2011 Season Preview3
 End of Season Picnic4
 Magician Visits Players.....4

Comedy Flows in Brooks' *The Producers*

by John Lieder

The last show in Community Players' "Season of Firsts" is the record-breaking, multiple Tony award-winning musical, *The Producers*. Adapted from Mel Brooks' 1968 movie starring Zero Mostel and Gene Wilder as producers Max Bialystock and Leo Bloom, the Broadway version featured Nathan Lane and Matthew Broderick. It is an irreverent look at show business, with content that is, as cast member Christy Berka puts it, "delightfully offensive." It is Mel Brooks, after all.

The now legendary roles of Bialystock and Bloom are in the very capable hands of **Brian Artman** and **Sean Stevens**. Artman, who has had a plethora of wonderful roles at Players and beyond is in top form as Bialystock. Stevens, a junior at NCWHS, is wonderfully cast as the mousy accountant who wants to be a Broadway producer.

Bialystock and Bloom are scheming to get rich by producing a show that is sure to fail. In that effort, they find what they think is the worst of all possible scripts,

"Springtime for Hitler," an ode to The Fuhrer written by pigeon lover Franz Liebkind, portrayed by **Brett Cottone**.

They procure the services of the worst director on Broadway, Roger DeBris, portrayed by **Fred Render**, who pledges to "Keep It Gay." Roger's "common law assistant" (Carmen Ghia) is played by **Joel Shoemaker**. The love interest in the show, if you don't count any of Bialystock's geriatric conquests, is the beautiful Ulla, played by **Aimee Kerber**. All of these featured performers have crafted delightful characterizations.

Not to be outdone is the very busy ensemble. Most members have multiple speaking roles and are included in the show's big production numbers. The ensemble consists of **Christy Berka**, **Wendy Clarenson**, **Wendi Fleming**, **Joey Knotts** (a CP newcomer), **Rosemary Luitjens**, **Dorothy Mundy**, **Nancy Nickerson**, **Jeff Ready**, **Bruce Parrish**, **Rebecca Peacock**, **Carol Plotkin**, **Jessica Stiller**, **Kelly Slater**, **Chuck Stuckey**, **Cody Stuepfert**, **Chris Strupek** (in her first credited role), **Joe Strupek**, **Catherine Urquhart**, **Opal Virtue**, and **Kevin Wickart**.



Joel Shoemaker, Joey Knotts, Wendi Fleming, Bruce Parrish, Sean Stevens, Brian Artman, and Fred Render resolve to "Keep It Gay." Photo by John Lieder.

... continued on page 4.

COMMUNITY PLAYERS
Calendar

May - June 2010

Board Meetings

May 11, 7:00 p.m.
June 8, 6:00 p.m.
Community Players Theatre

The Producers

Preview: May 6
Shows: May 7-9, 13-16, 20-23

Fantastic Mr. Fox

Child Auditions: May 22
Adult Auditions: May 24-25
Preview: July 8
Shows: July 9-11, 15-18, 22-25

Annual Membership Meeting

Tuesday May 11, 6 p.m.

End of Season Picnic

June 5, 1-5 p.m.
Tipton Park.



Community Players

201 Robinhood Lane
Bloomington, IL 61701
309-663-2121
www.communityplayers.org

Newsletter Committee

Jim Kalmbach
Barb Lemmon
John Lieder
Bob McLaughlin
Sally Parry

We are always looking for writers, artists, designers and story ideas. Send comments and suggestions to kalmbach@ilstu.edu

Curtain Calls is published six times a year for the voting members of Community Players.

For information about joining us, please contact our membership chair, Barb Lemmon at barb.lemmon@comcast.net.

Back issues of *Curtain Calls* are available on the Community Players web site. Click on "Newsletter Archive."

Fantastic Mr. Fox Auditions

Fantastic Mr. Fox will be auditioning for five males and two females plus a mixed adult and children's chorus.

This charming play will have delighted audiences gripping their seats! When Mr. Fox steals one chicken too many, Three Farmers, just about the meanest men you will ever encounter, decide the only cure is to rid themselves of Mr. Fox by any means possible. They are ready to shoot him, starve him or dig him out, but clever Mr. Fox has other plans. Outwitted at every turn, the farmers' ploys backfire, and all the animals celebrate a feast at their expense. This hilarious tale of ingenuity and trickery by Roald Dahl has been adapted for the stage by David Wood.



Our production is directed by **Tom Smith**. Co-producers are **Judy Stroh** and **Joel Shoemaker**. Assistant directors are **Thom Rakestraw** and **Zoë Mundy**.

While not a musical, per se, the show does contain some singing and choreographed movement with lots of audience participation encouraged! The children and adult chorus will include around 30+ performers with some speaking roles.

Adult (ages 13 and up) auditions for *Fantastic Mr. Fox* will be held May 24 and 25 at 7:00 pm. Children's audition will be held May 22 starting at 10 am, by appointment only. Parents of children 12 and under will be required to be involved in the show in some capacity. Families are encouraged to audition. Actors must be able to attend all performances.

Performance dates are July 9-11, 15-18, and 22-25, 2010.

To schedule auditions and for any questions regarding the show, please e-mail mrfoxauditions@gmail.com



Community Players Annual Membership Meeting

Community Players Theatre will hold its annual membership meeting on Tuesday, May 11, at 6:00 p.m. at the theater, 201 Robinhood Lane, Bloomington. We will have a brief business meeting, including election of new governors for the Board of Governors. Refreshments will follow after the meeting!

The following people are nominated to fill Board of Governors positions:

House and Grounds: **Jay Hartzler**

Membership: **Aimee Kerber**

Play Reading: **Brian Artman** and **Kevin Wickart**

Theater Tech: **Brett Cottone**, **Dave Fuller**, and **Tom Smith**

Treasurer: **Joel Shoemaker**

All current members of Community Players Theatre are eligible to vote in the election of governors.

Community Players Announces New Season

by Sally Parry

Community Players has an exciting season set for next year. Below are the audition dates, performance dates, and brief descriptions of the shows.

Smokey Joe's Café

This musical revue with music and lyrics by Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller was nominated for seven Tony Awards in 1995, and is the longest-running musical revue in Broadway history. Showcasing 39 rock & roll, pop, and rhythm & blues standards, this audience favorite features songs such as "There Goes My Baby," "Hound Dog," "Kansas City," "Yakety Yak," "Stand By Me," "Jailhouse Rock," and "On Broadway"!

Auditions: July 18, 19, and 20, 2010
Preview: September 9; Performances: September 10-12, 16-19, 23-26, 2010

Dracula

Bram Stoker's frightening novel was adapted for the stage by Hamilton Deane and John Balderston in 1923 with the blessing of Stoker's widow. The play served as the basis for the 1931 Universal horror film classic starring Bela Lugosi as Count Dracula. For all those fans of *Twilight*, here's the original vampire!

Auditions: September 13 and 14, 2010
Preview: October 28; Performances: October 29-31, November 4-7, 11-13, 2010

John Loves Mary

What's a buddy to do but marry his best friend's girl so that she can get into the U.S.? This hilarious farce, by Norman Krasna, is a World War II-era comedy about a soldier with the best of intentions, his not very understanding fiancée, his confused British wife, and his best friend who has already married someone else. Come see how it all works out.

Auditions: November 29 and 30, 2010
Preview: January 13; Performances: January 14-16, 20-23, 27-29, 2011

The Solid Gold Cadillac

A hilarious satire from the golden age of American comedy, *The Solid Gold Cadillac* is the story of how one little old lady took on a big corporation and came out on top. Made into a 1956 film featuring Judy Holliday and co-written by Pulitzer-Prize winner George S. Kaufman (*You Can't Take It With You* and *The Man Who Came to Dinner*) and Howard Teichman, *The Solid Gold Cadillac* remains as timely as when it premiered on Broadway in 1953.

Auditions: January 17 and 18, 2011
Preview: January 24; Performances: February 25-27, March 3-6, 10-12, 2011

Titanic: The Musical

This stunning and very moving musical is based on the ill-fated voyage of the *RMS Titanic*, the supposedly unsinkable ship, which sank on its maiden voyage on April 14, 1912. *Titanic* is a fictional account of the actual passengers and crew of the fated ship with some of the best music written in recent Broadway history. The show, with a book by Peter Stone and music and lyrics by Maury Yeston, won five Tony Awards in 1997, including Best Musical, Best Book of a Musical, and Best Original Score.

Auditions: March 13-15, 2011
Preview: May 5; Performances: May 6-8, 12-15, 19-22, 2011

~ COMMUNITY PLAYER'S LAB SHOW ~

Art

This thoughtful comedy by Yasmina Reza, translated by Christopher Hampton, concerns three long-time friends, one of whom buys a large, expensive, completely white painting. The other two are alternately horrified and bemused, leading to discussions about the nature of art and friendship. *Art* won the 1998 Tony and New York Drama Critics' Circle Awards for Best Play, as well as the Laurence Olivier, Molière, and Evening Standard Awards for Best Comedy.

Auditions: October 4 and 5, 2010
Performances: November 18-21, 2010

~ THEATER FOR YOUNG PEOPLE ~

Fantastic Mr. Fox

Based on the beloved story by Roald Dahl, and adapted for the stage by David Wood, *The Fantastic Mr. Fox* pits a wily fox against three local farmers who are out to get him. The animals all support Mr. Fox and help to save the day.

Auditions: May 22, May 24 and 25, 2010
Preview: July 8; Performances: July 9-11, 15-18, 22-25, 2010

. . . *The Producers* preview continued from page 1.

The production is under the direction of **Marcia Weiss**. **Kyle Freesen** is musical director. **Jason Strunk** is choreographer with assistance from **Wendy Clarenson**. **Jean and John Lieder** are the producers for *The Producers*. **Angie Schwab** is rehearsal accompanist and vocal coach. **Mark Wright** is lighting designer and **Rich Plotkin** controls the sound. **Dorothy Mundy** and **Carol Plotkin** are in charge of properties. **Judy Stroh** is stage manager. **Jessica Stiller** is assisting with vocals. **Opal Virtue** is in charge of costumes with assistance from **Sherry Bradshaw** and **Cathy Sutliff**. The costumes Opal has selected for Roger DeBris are worth the price of admission!

The multi-piece set is truly a collaborative effort. It has been designed by **Kerry Dixon-Fox**. **Anita Corso** and **Bruce Parrish** are co-builders with assistance from **John Brittingham** as lead carpenter, **Dave Fuller** as master painter and **Joe Strupek** as special assistant to the gimpy Parrish (broken foot). The production initiates the theatre's new projection system.

The pay-what-you-can Preview Performance is May 6, with regular performances May 7-9, 13-16 and 20-23. As always, evening performances begin at 7:30 with Sunday matinees at 2:30. With some crude language as well as some blatant stereotyping, *The Producers* is not intended for pre-teens or younger. (The 2005 movie version of the musical received a PG13 rating.)

The Producers is being sponsored by Millenium Pain Clinic.



Bob McLaughlin kicked off our highly successful spring lab show *Side by Side by Sondheim* with a Sunday lecture "Sondheim at 80: An Appreciation of Broadway's Greatest Composer." Photo by Joe Strupek.

End of Season Picnic!

Let's celebrate the end of a very successful 2009-2010 season at Community Players!

Please plan to join us at Tipton Park (shelter on GE Road near Airport Road) on June 5, 1:00-5:00 p.m. Please bring:

- Yourself, your friends, and your family (not necessarily in that order);
- A dish to share (salad, dessert, baked beans, etc.) ;
- Lawn chairs and outdoor games (if you want to play them).

Meat, drink, and paper products will be provided.

Hope to see you there!

Magician Visits Community Players

What do a leopard, a little girl, and a magician have in common? They were all on stage at Community Players on Saturday, February 6.

Garry Carson returned to our stage with his wonderful cats, magic and comedy for two shows. Although he primarily appears in Las Vegas, he performs fundraisers for non-profit organizations throughout the year. We were thrilled to have him back. This time Garry brought two young leopards: one was a traditional spotted leopard while his brother was all black. They delighted the audience, especially several people in the front row!

Participation is the backbone of his show, and he pulled seven or eight people of all ages from the audience to assist him. One woman was inspected for holes by her young son when she returned to her seat after being put on a bed of nails. Fortunately, Garry either left her intact or she healed very quickly.

Garry greeted his fans in the lobby after each performance signing autographs and posing for photos while his co-stars rested backstage. Be sure to watch for Garry in the series "Masters of Illusion" on PAX TV.

—Kathy Parrish



Zoë Mundy, a veteran of such Players shows as *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, *Honk*, and *Inherit the Wind* as well as an assistant director of our summer show *Fantastic Mr. Fox*, was recently given the Purple Pride Award from Bloomington High School. It recognizes students who have made a major contribution to the school through hard work, effort, determination, compassion, citizenship, and integrity. Congratulations, Zoë!