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TRIB local Wheaton

Wheaton native directs summer blockbuster "Around the World in 80 Days"



By Audra Sybert April 27 at 11:11 a.m.

Fox Valley Repertory is ready for a summer of stampeding elephants, raging typhoons and bandits, as they continue their inaugural season with the classic adventure novel and famous 1950s blockbuster film *Around the World in 80 Days*. Directed by Fox Valley Rep Artistic Director and Wheaton native John Gawlik, performances will take place at the Pheasant Run Resort Mainstage and is in collaboration with the inaugural St. Charles Summer Theater Fest in July.

Around the World in 80 Days will preview Thursday, June 9 through Friday, June 17, 2011. The show will open Saturday evening, June 18, 2011 and continue through Sunday, July 31, 2011.

Tickets are priced at \$29 on Fridays (and limited Thursday performances), and at \$39 on Saturdays and Sundays. Dinner show packages are available from \$49. Group rates and overnight packages are also available.

Join fearless adventurer Phileas Fogg and his faithful manservant as they race to beat the clock! Fogg has agreed to an outrageous wager that puts his fortune and his life at risk. With his resourceful servant Passepartout, Fogg sets out to circle the globe in an unheard-of 80 days. But his every step is dogged by a detective who thinks he's a robber on the run. Danger, romance, and comic surprises abound in this whirlwind of a show.

In 2001, Jules Verne's novel was adapted for the stage by American playwright Mark Brown. In what has been described as "a wildly wacky, unbelievably creative, 90-miles-an-hour, hilarious journey," this award-winning stage adaptation is written for a small ensemble of actors who portray 39 characters.

"We're excited to stage Jules Verne's adventure comedy. His books inspired generations of both children and adults to see the potential all around them. We will be taking a different direction for this show, by adding a role of a young boy," says Director John Gawlik. "The story itself is a dream, which will all take place in the boy's bedroom – a place where stampeding elephants, raging typhoons, and bandits will come alive!"

The cast of *Around the World in 80 Days* features (in alphabetical order): Peter DeFaria (previously in FVR's *Red Herring*), Sean Patrick Fawcett (previously in *Leaving Iowa*), Brian Hamman of Wheaton, Lauren Pizzi and Matthew Sherbach. Alternating the role of The Boy will be Batavia residents and FVR Academy students Caden Bohmer and Colin Steele.

John Gawlik, Wheaton native, directs the show after recently directing the remount of The Gift Theatre Company's *The Ruby Sunrise* at Theater on the Lake, named one of the Top Ten shows of 2009 by TimeOut Chicago Magazine. Other recent directing credits include Fox Valley Rep's *Always Patsy Cline*, *Red Herring*, *Over the Tavern*, smash hit *Altar Boyz* and the holiday classic *A Christmas Story*, as well as the Jeff Nominated productions of *W;t* for The Gift Theatre and *Dated: A Cautionary Tale for Facebook Users* for Collaboracion's Sketchbook Festival (Festival Best Director). John is the Artistic Director of Fox Valley Rep.

Around the World in 80 Days opens on Thursday, June 9, 2011 and runs through Sunday, July 31, 2011. Show times are Fridays and Saturdays at 8 p.m.; Sundays at 2 p.m. Thursday performances are available on June 9 and June 16 at 8pm; and June 23 and June 30 at 2pm. Special Note: The Saturday, July 16 performance is at 4pm. The Friday, July 15 & 19 performances are at 7:30pm. There are no performances on July 8 and 22. The show is rated PG.

This program is partially supported by a grant from the Illinois Arts Council, a state agency, and is sponsored in part by the Daily Herald and Dupage Airport.

Pheasant Run Resort is located at 4051 E. Main St., St. Charles, IL. For tickets, call the Pheasant Run Box Office at 630-584-6342, or visit www.ticketmaster.com. Additional performance information may be obtained at www.foxvalleyrep.org.

ABOUT THE ST. CHARLES SUMMER THEATER FESTIVAL

July 14 – 31, 2011

Comedies, dramas, new works, concerts and artists in action...all things to look forward to this July at the Inaugural St. Charles Summer Arts Fest. Local distinguished arts and business organizations are uniting to produce exciting, educational and innovative performances in the heart of the Fox Valley, including venues: Fox Valley Rep at Pheasant Run, Steel Beam Theatre, Arcada Theatre, Norris Cultural Arts Center and more.

FOX VALLEY REP FESTIVAL PERFORMANCES (appearing in Repertory)

Around the World in 80 Days

A Classic Adventure Comedy

July 15 – 31, 2010

Bad Dates

A Woman's Quest for Love and the Perfect Pair of Shoes

July 7 – August 7, 2011

By Theresa Rebeck

Directed by Kimberly Senior, one of Chicago's most acclaimed directors

If you like "Sex and the City" and Bridget Jones' Diary, you'll love this romantic one-woman comedy! Single mom and Texas transplant Haley Walker tries to balance the pressures of her new NYC restaurant career, raising a moody teenage daughter, and the too-close-for-comfort relationship with the Romanian mob, all while trying to find her way back into the dating scene...nothing that a great pair of shoes couldn't fix! Haley needs your shoulder to cry and laugh on as she shares her dating adventures with you.

Playing the role of Haley Walker is Lauren Pizzi, who will be appearing in repertory in Fox Valley Rep's Around the World in 80 Days.

Collider 2011: New Play Project

A new play program partnering local scientists and Fox Valley Repertory in developing new works that help us better understand the universe and who we are, while illuminating and celebrating the worlds of art, science and technology. Premiere staged readings will take place on Saturday afternoons (July 16, 23, and 30 at 1pm) from playwrights Reina Hardy, K. Frithjof Peterson and Garret Schneider. Tickets will be available at the door for a \$10 suggested donation.

For more information, visit www.summertheaterfest.org.