

Theater Happenings

Uranium The Musical Comes To Star Hall

KZMU's 4th annual radio play to be performed live March 9th and 10th

Uranium — the raw material of nuclear energy and atomic bombs, a mineral with a half-life of billions of years, a substance that can cause cancers. Uranium is no laughing matter. Yet KZMU's fourth annual radio play, "Uranium the Musical," is undoubtedly a comedy. Set in the Moab of 1956, the play features real people — "Uranium King" Charlie Steen, young park ranger Edward Abbey, Milt and Audrey Galbraith of Milt's Stop n Eat, and the "Goatman" Jack Holley — as well as fictional characters.

While the play is a fantasy, the setting is real: boomtown Moab, when the town's population stretched the limits of its infrastructure, and geiger counter-carrying prospectors were everywhere. Eisenhower was president, initiating a uranium giveaway to select countries around the globe in his "Atoms for Peace" program, and Elvis Presley had just released "Heartbreak Hotel." Not far away, the US was testing bombs in Nevada, and winds carried the fallout of these tests directly through St. George and southern Utah. In Moab, Charlie Steen's uranium money was funding churches, housing developments, property for an elementary school, and other noble causes.

The play focuses on Steen's story, as he persists in his belief about the location of a vein of uranium that would ultimately make him "Uranium King." Backed by his mother Rose, urged on by his wife ML, Steen — a geologist who had been blackballed out of the petroleum industry for being "innately rebellious against authority" — was determined to strike it rich, and uranium looked to be the way.

KZMU's radio plays were born out of the station's defunding four years ago by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB said KZMU was too small to survive). Faced with a diminished budget after the elimination of federal funding, KZMU turned to radio drama to boost the station's profile and add something to the coffers. Two seasons of Downtown Abbey (featuring the fictional 5th cousin twice removed of Edward Abbey), followed by last year's Beautiful Radiant Things (about the anarchist Emma

Goldman's birthday in prison), have nurtured a stable of local actors, musicians and crew who have dedicated themselves to the art of radio drama and the future of KZMU.

This year's production sees the return of three actor-singers and six newcomers to the cast of performers. Jenna Whetzel stars as a private eye, Melissa Graciosa plays multiple roles, and Brett Bentley returns to play Edward Abbey. The rest of the cast — Page Kannor, Terry Carlson, Gabriel Woytek, Liz Ballenger, Sam Newman and Nicole Fox — play multiple roles, conjuring up the Moab of the 50s. The orchestra features returning players Jessica Retka, Jeff Gutierrez and Miriam Graham, as well as newcomer Scott Clabby. Sam Bus'sard debuts to create sound effects, Joanne Savoie returns as assistant and stage manager, and playwright Marty Durlin directs.

Uranium the Musical will be performed on Saturday, March 9th at 7 pm; and Sunday, March 10th at 2 pm at



Star Hall. Tickets are \$15 and may be purchased at Back of Beyond Books, KZMU or at the door. It will also be performed in Paonia CO at the Paradise Theatre on Saturday, March 16th at 7 pm. Call KZMU at 435-259-8824 for more information and be sure to mention your read about it in *Moab Happenings*



Other upcoming KZMU events:

April 2nd - KZMU turns 27! We're bringing back the arm wrestling tournament, have some live DJs, and more. Keep an eye out for more details about our birthday festivities.

April 14th - KZMU Presents Shana Cleveland at the Seekhaven Chapel. Suggested donation \$10. Local opener TBD!

April 19 – 27 - SPRING RADIOTHON

May 4th - Kowz Mü Kid Songs Album release celebration at the Moab Valley Multicultural Center. Free and family friendly. More details will be available soon.

Moab Magic Man Returns

Everybody knows that Moab is a magical place. But did you know that Moab has its very own magic man? Rick Boretti has been wowing audiences throughout the west for years. Now he brings his jaw-dropping illusions very Thursday through Sunday to Moab's Backyard Theater, a new outdoor venue located in the heart of downtown.

"I love doing magic at the theater," Rick says. "It's great to see people laugh, have a good time and the adults



become kids again. People come back that have seen me over the years and become like family."

A working member of the International Brotherhood of Magicians, Boretti has been perfecting his craft over the years at festivals, theaters and private functions. He also



specializes in the difficult sleight of hand known as "close-up magic", creating illusions that can leave audiences gasping. His fascination with magic started early.

"I was bitten by the magic bug when I was 6. Later when I learned to do a cut and restored rope my life was never the same. I like to have fun and for people around me to have fun. Magic is one great way to do this."

When he's not doing magic, Boretti is a Ranger and wildlife biologist in the heart of the Canyonlands wilderness, helping keep people and animal populations safe on the San Juan river. But he's mostly famous around these parts for one thing: magic.

"I'm always working on creating new miracles," he says. It is family fun with lots of laughs but hopefully strong magic."

You can catch Moab's magic man this April every Thursday, Friday and Saturday at 7pm at Moab's Backyard Theater, located at 56 W. 100 South, just behind Zax. Admission is five dollars and worth every penny to see the premiere magician in Southeastern Utah.

Westminster Theatre Presents "The Christians" at Star Hall

By Lucas Hnath

Directed by Michael Vought

Pastor Paul has grown his modest storefront church with a few parishioners into a massive mega church numbering in the thousands. Yet, as convincing as Pastor Paul is, there is one member of his congregation he is unable to convince: himself. As the church he founded reaches its heights, he prepares to give a sermon that will shake the core of the establishment he founded.

Earning Lauded by the New York Post as "Deeply affecting. Emotionally devastating. A white-knuckled drama about a theological battle," this play, directed by Michael Vought, explores the depths of faith, religion, and how identity is intertwined with belief.

March 15 - 7pm

March 16 - 2pm & 7pm

Sponsored by Grand County Interfaith Coalition

General Information Contact
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