

SPECIAL EVENTS

Big Apple Circus brings 'Jazzmatazz' to town

BY KEELY WYGNONIK
STAFF WRITER

PREVIEW

Imagine, being at the circus, underneath an air-conditioned tent, only 60 feet away from the action in the center ring. That's what it's like to be at the Big Apple Circus, coming to Oakland Mall June 7-16. Call (810) 645-6666 for tickets or (313) 923-8259 for information.

This year's production "Jazzmatazz" celebrates the Jazz Age with tunes and tones of the 1920s and early 30s. Paris costume designer David Belugou has re-created the fun, flash and elegance of 1920s fashion.

Scenic designer James Leonard Joy has transformed the Circus ring into an Art Deco masterpiece.

Gary L. Wasserman of Birm-

ingham, president of the Troy-based Allied Metals Corporation, is responsible for bringing the Big Apple Circus to its only Midwestern stop this year.

This is the third year Wasserman has presented the Big Apple Circus, which is part of the events in the Detroit-Windsor International Freedom Festival.

He is also Chairman of the festival. Hudson's fireworks are a festival highlight, but Wasserman thought there should be something else too.

"I wanted something great out in this area," he said. "It's the size of the Big Apple Circus that makes it so thrilling. Because

nobody is more than 60 feet away, it's very personal. You're in the environment, and watch the spectacle in front of your nose."

A not-for-profit performing arts organization founded by artistic director Paul Binder in 1977 to introduce American audiences to the intimate and interactive environment of the classical circus, the Big Apple Circus emphasizes Broadway-style theatricality and artistry to thrill audiences of all ages.

"It's the European concept of circus, which showcases each artist," explains Wasserman.

"The Big Apple Circus has taken the European format and does it with a Broadway style."

This season's highlights include:

From Switzerland, juggling legend Kris Kemo and Slack-Wire dancer Masha Dimitri in a balancing act that involves foot-juggling on a wire in a dreamlike tribute to Amelia Earhart.

From Russia, the Egorov Troupe performs their award-winning acrobatics, which includes a hula hoop act featuring Elena Egorova.

Katja Schumann of Denmark will present a lively eight-horse liberty act, with the assistance of her daughter, Katherine Schumann Binder, 10.

The Big Apple Circus core company will participate throughout, displaying their versatility in acrobatics, dance, and comedy.



Presenter:
Gary L. Wasserman of Birmingham, president of the Troy-based Allied Metals Corporation, is responsible for bringing the Big Apple Circus to metro Detroit.

'Carousel' takes audience on whirlwind ride

St. Dunstan's Guild of Cranbrook presents "Carousel" 9 p.m. Thursday, Friday and Saturday, June 6-8 in Cranbrook's outdoor Greek Theatre, 400 Lone Pine Road, between Woodward and Lahser, Bloomfield Hills. Tickets \$12, senior citizens and students \$10. Call (810) 614-0527. BY TAMI TABACCHI SPECIAL WRITER

St. Dunstan's Guild of Cranbrook has revived Rodgers and Hammerstein's "Carousel" for their 64th season in the famed outdoor Greek Theatre. Located on the grounds of the Cranbrook Educational Community, there is no other theatrical experience that can compare to sitting under the stars and enjoying the

timeless music and choreography of "Carousel."

As stated by director Barbara Anne Gowans, "Carousel" is a brilliant show with a dark heart. It is about life and death, and of course, love. The carousel may simply be a metaphor for the ups and downs of life in our pursuit of that "perfect horse."

The play begins as lead character, Julie, played by Marnie Diehm who joined St. Dunstan's this season, falls in love with bad boy Billy Bigelow, played by 16-year St. Dunstan's veteran, Gary Jones. They sing a duet about love "If I Loved You" in their first conversation and decide to love until "death do us part." However, audiences soon learn

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that Billy is not the prince charming he appears to be. He is out of work, out of temper, and eventually pays the price for being up to no good.

There are many theatrical successes throughout St. Dunstan's version of "Carousel." Costume designers Amy Lynn Smith and Linda Parker Watson, have done a great job with the early 1900s classic costumes, matching mill-girl dresses, and exotic carnival attire.

Set/lighting designer, Obie Burch has cleverly designed the carousel; too bad we only see it for a moment in the beginning of

the play. The array of children, ranging from ages 1 to 19, bring small town realism to the play that is sure to make audiences smile.

Alexandra Silber, an obviously talented seventh grader and artist, dances beautifully in a memorable scene as Louise. Classic show tunes such as "June is Bustin' Out All Over" and "You'll Never Walk Alone" will have you singing the whole way home.

There are some wonderful acting performances given by many

of the characters. Each chorus member is positioned naturally throughout each scene and the children are always in character.

The Show Family, led by four-year St. Dunstan veterans Krystyn Loucks and Ron Zate, do a wonderfully comic performance as "Carousel's" odd-romance couple. Peggy Lee, who plays Nettie Fowler, will amaze you with her spectacular voice; every song she sings will send a shiver down your spine.

Joe Dabbs, who has almost 20 years experience in a variety of

theatrical areas with St. Dunstan's, will leave you shaking in your shoes as the devilish Jigger Craigin.

St. Dunstan's production of "Carousel" is an overall breath-taking experience. With so many wonderful performances, audiences will be taken back to the days of ole, when theater left the audience feeling good. "Carousel" is one whirlwind ride that is not to be missed.

JET extends 'Social Security' to June 16

Due to the show's popularity, JET Theatre is extending its run of "Social Security" to June 16. Dads admitted free on Father's Day, June 16.

Bring your Social Security Wednesday nights, and two get in for the price of one.

JET is in the Aaron Derox Theatre, 6600 West Maple, West Bloomfield. For tickets, and more information, call (810) 798-2900 or Ticketmaster, (810) 645-6666.

"Social Security" by Andrew Bergman is a comedy about love

at every age. It is a light-hearted examination of the mother-daughter relationship, the lessons of love and the importance of discovering or rekindling passion. "Social Security" also enjoyed an extended run on Broadway.

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