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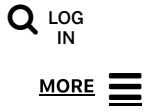
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# 'Journey for the Sun' is marvelously 'daffy' and loads of fun



The cast of "Journey for the Sun: A Sci-Fi Cartoon Circus" presented by The Actors Gymnasium." | Cole Simon Photo

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By

Catey Sullivan - For the Sun-Times  
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The two-story tall robot who shows up toward the action-packed finale of "Journey for the Sun: Sci-Fi Cartoon Circus" is a charmingly low-tech wonder. It takes six actors to manipulate the tin-foil shiny creature, who looks like some unearthly love child borne of "Lost in Space," "The Wizard of Oz," the films of Ed Wood and a toaster oven.

Confronted with a quartet of humans, the jumbo-sized smart machine in the Actors Gymnasium production has mixed feelings about them. On the one hand, there's the human predilection for "deforestation, global warming and clashing plaids." On the other hand, the contraption concedes, humans can be quite wonderful. Proof of this includes Claymation Christmas specials, compassion, art and "the way you talk to your cats when you think no one is looking."

### 'Journey for the Sun: A Sci-Fi Cartoon Circus'

★★★

When: Through March 25

Where: Actors Gymnasium at the Noyes Cultural Arts Center, 927 Noyes St., Evanston

Tickets: \$25

Info: [Actorsgymnasium.org](http://Actorsgymnasium.org) (<http://Actorsgymnasium.org>)

That pretty much sums up the daffy and wonderful dichotomy fueling "Journey for the Sun." On the one hand, the piece show that humans simply cannot be trusted with nice things, like the planet earth. On the other hand: Within the human race stride stout-hearted heroes whose undaunted courage can save the world.

Co-directed by Frank Maugeri and Lindsey-Noel Whiting and penned by Seth Bockley, "Journey for the Sun" has a bonkers plot that's just so crazy it works. With circus choreography by Sylvia Hernandez- DiStasi, original music and songs by Kevin O'Donnell and dance choreography by Kasey Foster, the 75-minute production has as much pageantry as it does story.

*"Poppy" the robot is just one of the marvelously zany cast members in "Journey for the Sun: A Sci-Fi Cartoon Circus" at the Actors Gymnasium. | Cole Simon*

That story stars a crew of scrappy underdogs on a cosmic, comic quest to prevent earth from turning into a giant fireball. The cast features 17 young performers drawn primarily from the Actors Gymnasium's Teen Ensemble, working alongside a trio of veteran actors (Kasey Foster, "human beatbox" Yuri Lane and seasoned clown/acrobat Jean Carlos Claudio). The whole group is well-versed in circus arts. Acrobatics, aerial ballets, a barrage of jugglers and a cameo by little green men (women? non-binary beings?) turn a well-worn plot into a series of ingenious spectacles. There's even a chorus line of dancing cars reminiscent of a Devo video, circa 1980.

Set in 1964, "Journey for the Sun" centers on Darryl (Foster), a balding, amiably paunchy Indiana man who owns a drive-in movie theater with a sentient popcorn machine. When not spewing buttery treats, "Poppy" informs an incredulous Darryl that the world's appliances have all gained consciousness and are deeply concerned about global warming. (On a lighter note, Poppy professes his love for a Bolivian toaster.) Someone, says Poppy, needs to go "calm down" the sun before it turns the earth to toast. Off goes Darryl and three pint-sized ushers (Emerson Catlin, Delilah Lane, Frida Maugeri), powered by rocket thrusters ordered from the back pages of a comic book.

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By Cascade

The cast embraces the loopy proceedings with a whole-hearted gusto that'll have you cheering them on from blast-off. What they lack in polish (although to be sure, many of these teens display Cirque de Soleil potential) they make up for in sheer joie de vivre. With Lane providing an elaborate soundscape of audio effects and Claudio serving as mostly silent sidekick (think Charlie Chaplin-meets-Marcel Marceau), "Journey" is a clever mix of silliness and seriousness. Global warming is no joke, but the shenanigans of the show's reluctant heroes are a hoot.

*The cast of "Journey for the Sun" embraces the loopy proceedings with a whole-hearted gusto that'll have you cheering them on from blast-off. | Cole Simon*

Hernandez has incorporated a variety show's worth of acts into the sometimes hallucinatory proceedings. Highlights include a pair of "moon goddesses" creating a mid-air pas de deux while suspended from a luminous chandelier and a dozen or so synchronized unicyclists sporting glow-in-the-dark stars shooting from their heads. At one point, a phalanx of chorines in goggles and silver leotards do an intricate ballet on fluid cascades of silk suspended from the rafters. It's as trippy as it is beautiful.

When the robot (designed by Jesse Mooney-Bullock) shows up, it's a fittingly outsized denouement. If the young human performers of "Journey to the Sun" are any indication, the future of the world is awash with creativity, compassion and wisdom.

Catey Sullivan is a local freelance writer.

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([https://tracking.truthfinder.com/?a=102&oc=27&c=396&subtheme=&s1=CM-Fashion&s2=AG-Desktop&s3=CRE-LauraNeck+TypeinYourName&s4=LP-396&s5=&utm\\_source=taboola&utm\\_medium=referral](https://tracking.truthfinder.com/?a=102&oc=27&c=396&subtheme=&s1=CM-Fashion&s2=AG-Desktop&s3=CRE-LauraNeck+TypeinYourName&s4=LP-396&s5=&utm_source=taboola&utm_medium=referral))

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([https://ultimatepetnutrition.com/cmd.php?ad=908268&utm\\_source=taboola&utm\\_medium=referral](https://ultimatepetnutrition.com/cmd.php?ad=908268&utm_source=taboola&utm_medium=referral))

### If Your Indoor Cat Vomits (Do This Every Day)

Ultimate Pet Nutrition

(https://ultimatepetnutrition.com/cmd.php?ad=908268&utm\_source=taboola&utm\_medium=referral)
(https://clknext.com/path/lp.php?trvid=10437&trvx=17f5d0ae&cid=15&utm\_term=chicagosuntimes-
chicagosuntimes&taboolaclid=CjA5NTFmYTYgOC0zM2l5LTQxYzU0OTQyOC03ZjExYzJjZTVmNzYtdHVjdDM2YzG1NmESFW1vYm54LXRvdGFscmVzdG9yZS1zYw)

### U.S. Cardiologist: It's Like a Pressure Wash for Your Insides

Gundry MD Total Restore Supplement

(https://clknext.com/path/lp.php?trvid=10437&trvx=17f5d0ae&cid=15&utm\_term=chicagosuntimes-
chicagosuntimes&taboolaclid=CjA5NTFmYTYgOC0zM2l5LTQxYzU0OTQyOC03ZjExYzJjZTVmNzYtdHVjdDM2YzG1NmESFW1vYm54LXRvdGFscmVzdG9yZS1zYw)
(https://thesportsdrop.com/the-best-worst-quarterback-in-each-nfl-teams-history/?utm\_term=chicagosuntimes-
chicagosuntimes&utm\_source=taboola&utm\_medium=referral&utm\_campaign=NFL\_Best\_QB\_V1\_DT\_TAB)

### All 32 NFL Team's Best And Worst Quarterback Ever

Sports Drop

(https://thesportsdrop.com/the-best-worst-quarterback-in-each-nfl-teams-history/?utm\_term=chicagosuntimes-
chicagosuntimes&utm\_source=taboola&utm\_medium=referral&utm\_campaign=NFL\_Best\_QB\_V1\_DT\_TAB)
(https://rtb-use.mfadsrvr.com/click/ba5XaNEZU8FYJqkcaLluDRN0x0qXgHRXIZZYhBXzXbu4p843Q4YRIO4Pit\_cEedj-g7-
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### Gut Doctor "I Beg Americans To Throw Out This Vegetable"

United Naturals

(https://rtb-use.mfadsrvr.com/click/ba5XaNEZU8FYJqkcaLluDRN0x0qXgHRXIZZYhBXzXbu4p843Q4YRIO4Pit\_cEedj-g7-
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type=mediaforce&aid=mediaforce01&cid=68&w=1&h=1&language=en)
(https://gundrymd.com/cmd.php?ad=893172&utm\_source=taboola&utm\_medium=referral)

### Top Cardiologist: "This At Home Method Is Helping Thousands Of Americans Reclaim Their Lives"

Gundry MD Energy Renew Supplement

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chicagosuntimes&utm\_thumbnail=https%3A%2F%2Fstatic.evq1.com%2Ff87a8749-9ed4-448b-90e5-9c7c1d9d1e9a.jpg&campaign\_id=1433165)

### Schaumburg, Illinois Drivers Are Stunned By This New Rule

EverQuote Insurance Quotes

(https://article.everquote.com/?h1=rule&h2=stunned&auuid=5189e416-c2e0-4a49-a11c-70859b8e72b1&&tid=584&id=584&subid=6871&dt=dup&utm\_medium=chicagosuntimes-
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## ★ CURRENTLY TRENDING

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### **CHICAGO**

**Ex-Rep. Schock gets deferred prosecution agreement, in stunning blow to feds**  
(<https://chicago.suntimes.com/news/former-congressman-aaron-schock-investigation-court-case-campaign-committee/>)

### **DEAR ABBY**

**Dear Abby: He dumped me, now wants to cheat with me**  
(<https://chicago.suntimes.com/lifestyles/dear-abby-he-dumped-me-now-wants-to-cheat-with-me/>)

### **FEATURES**

**How West Side bust led feds to 'El Chapo'**  
(<https://chicago.suntimes.com/feature/how-west-side-bust-led-feds-to-el-chapo/>)

### **CHICAGO**

**Sun-Times cancels mayoral debate after Preckwinkle won't commit to showing up**  
(<https://chicago.suntimes.com/news/sun-times-cancels-mayoral-debate-preckwinkle-noncommittal-lightfoot/>)

### **BASEBALL**

**Why Cubs' Pedro Strop is anomaly among relievers**  
(<https://chicago.suntimes.com/sports/why-cubs-pedro-strop-is-anomaly-among-relievers/>)









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