

Theater events: Paramount hosts 'SPANK!' for 1-night only

Barbara Vitello





- "SPANK!," appearing at Paramount Theatre in Aurora on Friday, Oct. 24, stars Amanda Barker, Danielle Trzcinski and David Raposo.
- Paramount Theatre presents "SPANK! The Fifty Shades Parody" for one performance only at 8 p.m. Friday, Oct. 24,

at 23 E. Galena Blvd., Aurora. This show is adults only. (630) 896-6666 or paramountaurora.com.

'New Stages': Goodman Theatre hosts its 11th annual New Stages Festival, a free showcase of in-development plays that may well show up at the Goodman or on other stages in the future. The plays include "Carlyle," an examination of right-wing politics by Thomas Bradshaw; Charise Castro Smith's "Feathers and Teeth," about a fractured family; and Andrew Hinderaker's "The Magic Play," a commission by Goodman and Roundabout Theatre. Performances begin at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 29, at 170 N. Dearborn St., Chicago. Free, but reservations are required. (312) 443-3800 or goodmantheatre.org.

'Camelot' in Oak Brook: East Coast director Alan Souza makes his Chicago-area debut with a revival of "Camelot," the 1960 King Arthur-inspired musical about love, chivalry and betrayal by Alan Jay Lerner and Frederick Loewe and featuring new orchestrations by Matt Aument. Broadway veterans Ken Clark and Christy Altomare star as Arthur and Guenevere, with Travis Taylor as Lancelot. Previews begin at 8 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 30, at 100 Drury Lane, Oakbrook Terrace. The show opens Nov. 6. \$40-\$55. (630) 530-0111 or drurylane.com.

Mayhem at Mayslake: First Folio Theatre hosts a special Halloween performance of its world-premiere production of "The Gravedigger," Joseph Zettelmaier's "Frankenstein"-inspired drama that imagines events Mary Shelley didn't include in her 1818 novel. The evening includes a cocktail reception, tour of the Mayslake Peabody Estate and a costume contest followed by an 11 p.m. performance of the play starring Craig Spidle as the titular gravedigger and Joshua Carroll as the Creature. 8:30 p.m. Friday, Oct. 31, at 1717 W. 31st St., Oak Brook. \$65. (630) 986-8067 or firstfolio.org.

Other theater events

- ARTiCuLIT Readers Theatre hosts an afternoon tea and performance beginning at 1 p.m. Friday, Oct. 24, at High Tea with Gerri, 144 Old McHenry Road, Long Grove. The four-course high tea is followed by a performance of "Out of Our Father's House," consisting of readings from the diaries and journals of suffragette Elizabeth Cady Stanton, labor organizer Mother Mary Jones, doctor/minister Dr. Anna Howard Shaw and others. \$45. Reservations required. (847) 948-1724 or articultreaderstheatre.com.

- The lives of reclusive Beane, his uptight sister and her husband change after a beautiful stranger breaks into Beane's apartment in John Kolvenbach's "Love Song." Honest Theatre concludes its inaugural season with the dark romantic comedy, which runs Friday, Oct. 24, through Sunday, Nov. 2, at Northwestern University's Wallis Theatre, 1949 Campus Drive, Evanston. See honesttheatre.com.

- Transcendent Ensemble Theatre Company takes on one of Shakespeare's most resonant tragedies in its world premiere of "Something Wicked: Shakespeare's Macbeth Re-envisioned," a violent, immersive production adapted and directed by Lindsay Allen Bartlette. Audience members will receive gowns to protect against blood splatter. Performances begin at 8 p.m. Friday, Oct. 24, at 1434 N. Western Ave., Chicago. The Oct. 31 performance includes the show and an after-party. Costumes optional. See somethingwicked.brownpapertickets.com.

- Steel Beam Theatre, 111 W. Main St., St. Charles, hosts Haunted Improv, a family-friendly program consisting of comedy skits and improvised games. It takes place at 10:30 a.m. and 1 p.m. Saturdays beginning Saturday, Oct. 25, at Steel Beam Theatre. (630) 945-0052 or steelbeamtheatre.com.

- Theatre-Hikes brings its show "Resurrected" -- made up of five Chicago-area haunted tales -- to parks and venues around the city. The run/walk concludes at 8 p.m. Saturday and Sunday, Oct. 25-26, with a late-night performance at the Pullman State Historic Site, 11057 S. South Cottage Grove, Chicago. See theatre-hikes.org.

- Redmoon Theatre hosts its annual family-friendly Halloween-themed Skelebration 2014 at 1, 4 and 7 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 25, and 1 and 4 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 26, at 2120 S. Jefferson St., Chicago. The event includes a haunted cavern, music, dancing, games and gadgets. For the 21-and-older crowd, Redmoon also hosts the adults-only Boneshaker, its annual Halloween event featuring food, cocktails, dancing and other activities. It begins at 9

p.m. Friday, Oct. 31, at the same address. (312) 850-8440, ext. 123, or redmoon.org.

- Barrel of Monkeys' latest version of its long-running showcase of stories and sketches written by Chicago public school students is titled "Chicago's Weird, Grandma." It opens Monday, Oct. 27, at The Neo-Futurist Theatre, 5153 N. Ashland Ave., Chicago. Guest companies scheduled to work with the young students include Lookingglass Theatre, The Neo-Futurists, Noah Ginex Puppet Company, The Hypocrites and The Young Fugitives. (312) 409-1954 or barrelofmonkeys.org.

- The African American Arts Alliance of Chicago honors Joel Hall (founder and artistic director of the Joel Hall dancers) with its lifetime achievement award at 6:30 p.m. Monday, Oct. 27, at the DuSable Museum, 740 E. 56th Place, Chicago. (773) 754-3923 or africanamericanartsallianceofchicago.com.

- During 1988, in a rural Illinois town, a family resorts to questionable measures and unusual agricultural practices to keep their farm from foreclosure in "Lotto Fever in the Sucker State." Saint Sebastian Players stages Leigh Johnson's world premiere effort, which begins previews Tuesday, Oct. 28, at St. Bonaventure, 1625 W. Diversey Ave., Chicago. At every performance, SSP will collect donations for the Family Farm Disaster Fund, a project of Farm Aid. U.S. veterans will be admitted free from Nov. 7-9. (773) 404-7922 or saintsebastianplayers.org.

- "Too Much Fright Makes the Baby Go Blind" is the title of The Neo-Futurists' darkly comic Halloween show consisting of 30 plays in 60 minutes. It begins at 7 p.m. Friday, Oct. 31, at 5153 N. Ashland Ave., Chicago. (773) 275-5255 or neofuturists.org.

- Writers Theatre broke ground earlier this week on its new home, designed by Studio Gang Architects and scheduled for completion in 2016. "Our new building ensures that Writers Theatre becomes part of the permanent landscape of the Chicago cultural community, taking its place alongside the nation's leading dramatic institutions," said artistic director Michael Halberstam in a prepared statement. The Glencoe theater has raised \$26.5 million of its \$31 million campaign. Located on the former site of the Woman's Library Club of Glencoe, the new complex will have a 250-seat theater and a flexible space that seats between 50 and 99 along with other amenities. See writerstheatre.org.

- 3Arts, a nonprofit Chicago agency, makes unrestricted monetary awards annually to female artists, minority artists and artists with disabilities in the disciplines of dance, music, theater, teaching arts and visual arts. Two Chicago-area theater artists are among this year's recipients. They are circus artist and choreographer Sylvia Hernandez-Distasi ("Hard Times," "Lookingglass Alice") and playwright Calamity West ("Ibsen is Dead," "The Gacy Play").

- Rivendell Theatre Ensemble announced its 2014-2015 season will begin Nov. 5, with ensemble member Megan Carney's "Women at War," an examination of whether females should serve in combat that grew out of interviews with women who fought on the front lines. That's followed by the world premiere of "Look, we are breathing" (April 2-May 16, 2015), about a mother, a teacher and a friend grieving the loss of a young man and, in the process, learning who he was. From May 30 to June 28, 2015, Rivendell remounts its critically acclaimed production of Joel Drake Johnson's "Rasheeda Speaking" at the Steppenwolf Garage. It's about a doctor who's uncomfortable with his black receptionist and enlists his office manager to get rid of her. The season concludes with the Midwest premiere of "How the World Began" (Sept. 3-Oct. 17, 2015), Catherine Trieschmann's drama about the conflict between religion and science in a small Kansas town. Performances take place at 5779 N. Ridge Ave., Chicago. Season flex passes (\$80, \$110) are available, as are single tickets. (773) 334-7728 or rivendelltheatre.org.

- Genesis Theatrical Productions recently announced its upcoming four-show season. It begins March 26 at The Athenaeum, 2936 N. Southport Ave., Chicago, with "Creation's Birthday," Hasan Padamsee's examination of the big bang theory. That's followed by Neil Cole's "Groucho" (July 23-Aug. 9 at Raven Theater, 6157 N. Clark St.), a play with music chronicling Groucho Marx's life. Stephanie Liss' "On Holy Ground" (July 2-Aug. 2 at Theater Wit, 1229 W. Belmont Ave.) is about two mothers -- one Israeli and one Palestinian -- who are united by a tragedy. The season concludes with "Hope Throws Her Heart Away" (November 2015, venue TBD), Susan Goodell's solo dramedy about

a woman adrift. A Genesis "grab bag pass," enabling patrons to see four shows for the price of three, will be available by the end of the year. (773) 800-1703 or genesistheatricals.com.

- Goodman Theatre announced that producers Kevin McCollum ("Motown the Musical," "Avenue Q") and Liza Lerner (daughter of lyricist Alan Jay Lerner) will "further develop" Goodman's award-winning revival of "Brigadoon," which was among the Jeff Committee's most honored productions at the recent Joseph Jefferson Awards ceremony. Whether that means a Broadway transfer remains to be seen. Also, Goodman announced rehearsals begin Nov. 4 in Los Angeles for a remount of the Jeff Award-winning "Luna Gale," by Rebecca Gilman, featuring the original cast led by Mary Beth Fisher.