



Williams Street Repertory's "Wonderful" Radio Play

Fresh off the success of *Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street*, Williams Street Repertory prepares for its next production, *It's A Wonderful Life: A Radio Play*. The show opens November 29 at 3:00pm and runs select dates and times through December 8. Performances take place at Raue Center For The Arts located at 26 N. Williams Street in Historic Downtown Crystal Lake, Illinois.

The iconic play written by Philip Grecian is back! Bring the whole family to experience this classic holiday tale. This is your chance to fall in love with the story of Bedford Falls all over again in a way you've never seen it (or heard it) told before.

Tom Burke –Kaiser serves as the director of *It's A Wonderful Life: A Radio Play*. For over 20 years, Burke-Kaiser has worked in theatre, film and TV as a director, producer, educator, and actor. Having graduated with a BA in theatre as an acting specialist from the University of Wisconsin, Madison, he went on to complete an intensive two year directors training program at New Theatre Conservatory in Boston and eventually made his way to New York City to graduate with an MFA in directing from the prestigious Actors Studio Drama School at the New School University.

Burke-Kaiser's primary training and experience is as a director. Having directed plays in a wide variety of venues, including the Circle in the Square Theater and The 42 Street Workshop in New York City, The Charles in Boston, The Lyric Opera House in Milwaukee, and White Barn Theatre in West Port. Some of his theatrical directing credits include *Beyond Therapy* by Christopher Durang, *Ohio Impromptu* and *Krapp's Last Tape* by Samuel Becket, *Aria Da Capo* by Edna St. Vincent Millay, *Woman and Wallace* by Jonathan Marc Sherman, *The Eumenides* by Aeschylus, *Riches* by Lee Blessing, *Stop The World, I Want To Get Off* by Leslie Bricusse and Anthony Newley, *The Zoo Story* by Edward Albee, and *Virginia* by Edna O'Brian.

Playing the one and only George Bailey will be David Lowenthal. Alicia Regan* will play Mary-Hatch Bailey. Portraying a mix of characters and voices are Ron Relic* (Mr. Gower, Mr. Potter, Ensemble), Amy Ferraro* (Tilly, Mrs. Bailey, Ensemble), Mark R

Mahallak (Joseph, Mr. Bailey, Uncle Billy), Deric Gochenauer (Clarence), Ryan Dooley (Harry Bailey, Bert the Cop, Ensemble), Casi Maggio (Violet Bick, Zuzu Bailey, Ensemble) and Ryan McNerney (Ernie Bishop, Mr. Carter, Ensemble). The production will also feature a live orchestra. *Member of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers.

Behind the scenes, the production crew includes Michael Gillis (Assistant Director), Pat Henderson (Stage Manager), Richard Kuranda (Founding Artistic Director), Mike Vandercook (Director of Production), John Dwher (Sound Designer, Production Coordinator and Sound Supervisor), Daniel Gallagher (Lighting Designer), Steven Spera (Technical Manager and Lighting Supervisor), Nick Rastenis (Scenic Designer), Patty Halajian (Costume Designer), Heather Olcott (Production Assistant and Props Master), Daniel Carlyon (Foley Artist) and Evan Swanson (Music Director).

The orchestra is made up of Evan Swanson (Piano), Steve Kidera (Saxophone), Eli Broxham (Bass) and Tom Kidera (Drums).

WSR's third season will also include fully mounted productions of Loves Me (February 2014) and Barefoot in the Park (May 2014). The company will also continue its monthly reading series, Get Lit(erary), as well as their new staged playwright series, Contemporary Voices.

Over the past year Raue Center has attracted regional and national attention from media powerhouses like Playbill.com and BroadwayWorld.com.

Steve Cochran of WIND Fox Radio praised WS Rep calling its work, "Challenging, provocative and, oh yeah... Fun."

Rick Kogan of WGN also had rave reviews of Raue Center and WS Rep saying, "You must, must see this amazing work at this beautiful theater. Outstanding."

Following the Opening Night performance of It's A Wonderful Life: A Radio Play is the Festival of Lights Parade through Downtown Crystal Lake! With plenty of unique shops and delicious restaurants lining Williams Street, it's easy to make a day out of it.

Tickets start at \$25 and group pricing is available! Tickets can be purchased online at WWW.WSREP.ORG, WWW.RAUECENTER.ORG or via the Box Office at 815.356.9212 or 26 N. Williams Street in downtown Crystal Lake.

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