



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE October 23, 2007

MEDIA RELEASE

Please include in NOVEMBER & DECEMBER calendar listings and announcements

Media Contact: Julie Sutherland
604.731.5483 julie@pacifictheatre.org

Enter into the Holiday Spirit with *This Wonderful Life*, a One-Man Version of the Christmas Classic, *It's A Wonderful Life*

IN SHORT: It is **Christmas Eve** in a wartime New England town. Despairing over a life of dreams deferred, George Bailey sets out to throw himself from a bridge – until a dotty angel-in-waiting shows him what might have been had he never lived at all. A **single actor** stunningly recreates over **two dozen memorable characters** in this imaginative tour-de-force. At turns hilarious, touching, and even dark, *This Wonderful Life* is a holiday show not to be missed! Starring **Dan Amos**. Directed by **Morris Ertman**.

Playing Nov. 29 to Dec. 29 (opens Nov. 30). For tickets (\$16-\$32, GST incl.) call 604.731.5518 or pacifictheatre.org. Tickets on sale Sept. 4, or immediately online.

Vancouver, BC – November 29 - December 29 (opens November 30)

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Pacific Theatre is delighted to join you in your Christmas festivities with this **quintessential holiday show**. The heartwarming drama was first brought to the silver screen in 1946, and has seen multiple incarnations in its 61 years. The **Canadian premiere** of this **one-man revivification** stars **Dan Amos** (*The Quarrel, A Bright Particular Star*) as the **entire cast of over two dozen** unforgettable characters.

Ever-faithful to the script, playwright Steve Murray brings us all the show's beloved or unforgettable characters, including George Bailey, Mister Potter, Clarence, and little Zuzu, who reminds us all that **every time a bell rings an angel gets his wings**.

Directed by **Morris Ertman**, with scenery and lighting design by Kevin McAllister, and sound design by Paul Moniz de Sá. At turns hilarious, touching, and even dark, *This Wonderful Life* is a holiday show not to be missed!

Details:	This Wonderful Life by Steve Murray
When:	Nov. 29 – Dec. 29 (Opens Nov. 30), Wed–Sat at 8pm, Sat at 2pm (Preview Nov. 29)
Where:	Pacific Theatre , 1420 West 12th Ave (at Hemlock St), Vancouver, BC
Tickets:	\$16-\$32 (GST incl.) – To reserve call 604.731.5518 , or visit pacifictheatre.org , or in person at the Box Office. Tickets on sale at box office or online.

Contact Julie Sutherland for interviews or further information.

ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHT – Steve Murray



Steve Murray is a nationally produced, award-winning playwright and film critic. He's a graduate of UNC- Chapel Hill and a playwright-in-residence at Emory University's Theater Emory. His scripts have been produced in Atlanta at Emory, Actor's Express, Horizon Theatre Company and PushPush, and at Portland Center Stage, Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park, San Francisco's New Conservatory Theater and other venues. "This Wonderful Life" is also being produced this season at Pittsburgh Public Theater, San Jose Repertory and Lyric Stage in Boston.

ABOUT THE DIRECTOR – Morris Ertman



Morris is pleased to be back at Pacific Theatre for Christmas. Select credits include the direction of: Pacific Theatre's acclaimed productions of Espresso, "MASTER HAROLD"...and the boys, Cotton Patch Gospel, The Quarrel, Shadowlands, Damien, and many others; Chemainus Theatre's An L.M. Montgomery Christmas, The Fantastics and A Christmas Carol; Rosebud Theatre's The Good Doctor, The Kite, Talley's Folley, Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat, The Drawer Boy, On Golden Pond, Godspell, Cariboo Magi, Cotton Patch Gospel and Arms and the Man; and Vancouver Opera's Pirates of Penzance. He has also designed for Stratford Festival, National Arts Centre, The Canadian Opera Company, Citadel Theatre, and Edmonton Opera. He is also responsible for the writing (with Ron Reed) and direction of the acclaimed production of Tent Meeting at Toronto's Brookstone Performing Arts, where it earned four Dora Award nominations including Best New Musical and Best Production. It has been produced to critical acclaim in numerous theatres in the US and Canada. Mr. Ertman is presently the Artistic Director of Rosebud Theatre. He is also the recipient of nine Sterling Awards and a Dora Award for the Canadian Opera Company's Beatrice et Benedict.

ABOUT THE FILM



It's A Wonderful Life (1946) became one of the most popular and heartwarming films ever made by director Frank Capra, who claimed the film to be his own personal favourite. James Stewart also claimed the film to be his favourite amongst all of his feature films. Though, **the success of the film came long after its original release.**

When the film first made it to the silver screen it was a **box office flop**. It only became a classic in the 1970's when a **flaw in the copyright protection allowed the film to be aired on TV stations for free**. It soon became an American holiday classic. Later in 1993 the copyright was reclaimed. Now the film can only be shown on the NBC-TV network, with Paramount Pictures owning the distribution rights.

The film's screenplay was **based on an original short story** called "The Greatest Gift", **first written on a Christmas card** by Philip Van Doren. The screenplay is credited as being written by Frances Goodrich, Albert Hackett, and Frank Capra, with additional scenes by Jo Swerling. There were, however, many uncredited for their work on the script including Dorothy Parker, Dalton Trumbo, and Clifford Odets.

While the picture never won any Oscars, it did earn **five Academy Award nominations** including Best Picture, Best Actor (James Stewart), Best Director (Frank Capra), Best Sound Recording, and Best Film Editing.

SPEAKEASY INTERVIEW WITH STEVE MURRAY

Discussion with playwright Steve Murray about the debut performance of *This Wonderful Life* at the Portland Center Stage

Atlanta playwright Steve Murray takes a holiday from his signature witty, sexy shows such as *Manna and Rescue* and *Recovery* to adapt America's favorite Christmas film -- *It's a Wonderful Life* -- as a one-man show for Portland Center

Stage, where former Actor's Express founder and artistic director Chris Coleman now works. The sometime film critic for the Atlanta Journal-Constitution talks about adjusting to the pace of Bedford Falls for the world premiere of *This Wonderful Life*.

As a film critic, do you find it strange to be tampering with a classic film?

Not really. *It's a Wonderful Life* is more than a classic film now. It's become the States' Christmas Carol. It has a mythic resonance -- and at the same time, it's so ingrained in our culture, it's easy to tweak and make fun of. Nothing I do in the script -- like throw in wisecracks about some of the sillier elements of the movie -- can ever harm *Life's* place in people's hearts.

Is doing an uplifting holiday story a change of pace for you?

Actually, you may have forgotten how dark a movie *Life* can be. It's got alcoholism, child abuse, attempted suicide -- and a spectacularly intense performance by Jimmy Stewart. The movie is uplifting, sure, but it earns it the hard way.

How do you compress *It's a Wonderful Life* into a one-man show?

You kill things you love. We're turning a 130-minute movie into a 75-minute play. Some elements just have to go, even favorite moments, like George Bailey wrecking his car. Honestly, I wish I could see [actor] Mark Setlock's 130-minute version of the whole thing. He's got Jimmy Stewart and Lionel Barrymore down pat, and sometimes it's a shock when he just talks as, you know, himself.

Holman, Curt. *Speakeasy with playwright Steve Murray*. Dec. 21, 2005.
URL: <http://atlanta.creativeloafing.com/gyrobase/Content?oid=oid%3A57295>