

arts & entertainment news



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TONIGHT AT LAKE SUMTER LANDING MARKET SQUARE

Clark Barrios Band

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TONIGHT AT BROWNWOOD PADDOCK SQUARE

Paisley Craze

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ROME

Holocaust Survivor Opens Book Fair After Neo-Fascist Banned

A Holocaust survivor opened a book fair in Italy on Thursday to a standing ovation, after organizers agreed to ban a publisher linked to a neo-fascist group. Halina Birenbaum, an 89-year-old poet, was quoted saying "this is more proof for me that evil will not win." Birenbaum and the Auschwitz-Birkenau museum had threatened to boycott the fair if it included the Altaforte publishing house, whose director is a self-proclaimed fascist.

— *The Associated Press*

Backstage Pass

INSIGHTS ON STAGE, SCREEN AND BEYOND

Play Workshop Takes Scripts From the Page To the Stage



HOW DO I BUY TICKETS?

The Villages Entertainment sells tickets in person at its four box office locations or online at thevillagesentertainment.com

All box office locations are open from 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Spanish Springs: 970 Del Mar Drive

Lake Sumter Landing: 1070 Canal St.

Brownwood: 2726 Brownwood Blvd.

Savannah Center: 1545 N. Buena Vista Blvd.

By **KRISTEN FIORE** | *Daily Sun Senior Writer*

Seeing your own original play come to life before your eyes is what playwrights live for, said Richard Gibbs, of the Village Santo Domingo.

"You write the play, but to see it performed, that's what it's all about," Gibbs said. "Seeing actors give it life is as exciting as writing it."

Professional actors and directors breathed life into four original scripts this week at the Studio Theatre Tierra del Sol as part of the venue's inaugural play workshop, "Scripts from Scratch."

Playwrights from across Florida were invited to participate. Four of the 40 submitted

scripts were chosen for the workshop, giving the authors an opportunity to work with theater professionals throughout the week.

Audiences get to see staged readings of all four plays today and Saturday.

Today's plays, Gibbs' "One Open Marriage" and J. Andrew Norris' and Ezra Brain's "Something's Coming," are sold out, but seats remain for Lakeland writer Greg Burdick's "Accommodation" at 4 p.m. Saturday and St. Petersburg theater educator William Leavengood's "A Superior Shakespeare," at 7 p.m. Saturday.

Tickets are \$10 for each performance and can be purchased online at thevillagesentertainment.com or at any Villages Box Office location.

To read more about the plays and the people who wrote them, visit thesharonstudio.com and click the "New Play Workshop" tab.



Hannah Ridings | *Daily Sun*

Sarah French, center, of Winter Haven, reads lines with her co-stars Dave Russell, left, of Orlando, and Roy Hamlin, right, of Eustis, for the upcoming play "A Superior Shakespeare."

Each script got its own director and set of actors.

"As a director, working on an original script is my favorite

work to do," said Orlando director Bobbie Bell, who

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arts & entertainment news

CELEBRITY SPOTLIGHT



BRITNEY SPEARS

The pop-star was granted a temporary restraining order against a former confidante who she says has been harassing her family again. A judge ordered 44-year-old Sam Lutfi to stay at least 200 yards from her, her parents and her two sons.



JAMES CAMERON

The filmmaker has no bad blood with the Avengers, though "Endgame" has eclipsed "Titanic's" world-wide record and bumped the 1997 blockbuster to third place. Cameron tweeted a note to Marvel president Kevin Feige.



SIVAN ALYRA ROSE

The newcomer actress represents a rarity as one of the few people of Native American descent to star in a Netflix series — or any television series, for that matter.

LONDON

Ban it Like Beckham: Phone Costs Soccer Star Right to Drive

David Beckham has been banned from driving for six months for using a mobile phone while behind the wheel of his Bentley. A prosecutor said a member of the public spotted the former Manchester United and England soccer star holding a phone while driving through central London on Nov. 21. Beckham's lawyer, Gerrard Tyrrell, said his client had "no recollection" of the incident but pleaded guilty.

— The Associated Press

Continued from Previous Page

is working on "One Open Marriage." "I prefer it, because any time you work with a script that has had other productions, you always have the weight of those other productions and how everybody else has done it."

Roy Hamlin, of Eustis, is the director of "Accommodation," a show he said is both contemporary and strong.

"It's really interesting," he said. "It's based in a school. My mom taught public school for 50 years, so a lot of what happens in the play I recognize. It's about the ongoing struggle in how to mainstream differently abled students in an academic environment."

Hamlin said there's nothing quite like the feedback that a workshop like Scripts from Scratch can provide for playwrights.

"Any exposure an emerging playwright can get is terrific," he said.

Although a staged reading could eventually lead to a full-scale production, just being able to see the audience's

response is helpful, according to Leavengood.

"For me, a good reading has almost as much power as a full production," he said.

The opportunity to hear your words in somebody else's mouth is priceless, said Shami McCormick, who is directing "A Superior Shakespeare."

"As you develop your characters and you're writing them down, they have a particular voice for you," McCormick said. "To hear it outside of your head is really, extraordinarily helpful."

Theater is a collaborative art, after all.

"We want to thank the Studio Theatre for doing this," McCormick said. "Not enough theaters have this kind of experience, and it's so helpful to get your work out there. It's so difficult to get from page to stage, and this is an essential aspect of that process."

Kristen Fiore is a senior writer with The Villages Daily Sun. She can be reached at 352-753-1119, ext. 5270, or kristen.fiore@thevillagesmedia.com.

Santa Fe Opera Announces Plans to Stage World Premieres

By MORGAN LEE
The Associated Press

SANTA FE, N.M. World-premiere operas derived from the gender-bending Broadway hit "M. Butterfly" and from meditations on Victorian-era repression in Bram Stoker's "Dracula" are coming to the Santa Fe Opera and its open-air stage in the high desert.

Opera General Director Robert Meya on Wednesday announced upcoming productions for 2020 that include retooled staples such as "Il Barbiere di Siviglia (The Barber of Seville)" and the revival of Tim Albery's version

of Mozart's "Die Zauberflöte (The Magic Flute)."

In recent years, Santa Fe has been the backdrop for productions about the dawn of the nuclear age in 1940s New Mexico and a world premiere of a techno-infused opera about Apple co-founder Steve Jobs. Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsberg has been a regular visitor to performances in Santa Fe.

The upcoming operatic version of "M. Butterfly" comes from playwright and librettist David Henry Hwang — author of the Broadway play about a French diplomat's romantic affair with enigmatic opera star in China. That play has parallels with "Madama Butterfly," the 1904 staple of operatic repertoire

from Giacomo Puccini.

The new "M. Butterfly" opera is scored by Chinese-born Huang Ruo, whose prior work "Dr. Sun Yat-Sen" ran in Santa Fe and was banned in mainland China.

In a pre-recorded interview played at a press conference announcing the performances, Huang says he adapted elements of an overture in Puccini's Butterfly.

"I invert it into a Chinese operatic style," he said. "It sounds quite Pekingese opera-ish."

The Santa Fe Opera also is preparing for the premiere in 2021 of an opera set in Victorian

England based in part on "Dracula." Meya says "Lord of the Cries" addressed issues of repression and human nature with contemporary touches that can appeal to younger audiences — something opera companies across the country are striving to achieve.

"New audiences are much more apt, as we've seen with Steve Jobs and 'Cold Mountain,' to buy a ticket and come to the theater and experience opera on our stage if the subject matter is topical and relatable," said Meya, referencing the prior adaptation of Charles Frazier's novel set in Civil War-era North Carolina.

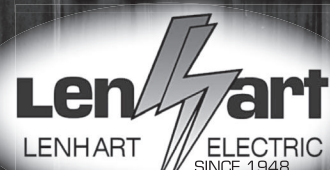
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