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ARTS & LIFE

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Play puts a comic spin on Robin Hood

Miller students plumb classic for laughs

ANNIE McLEOD
FOR THE LEADER-POST

It's the legendary tale that continues up images of men in tight, brown and orange and the infamous Sheriff of Nottingham. But next week at Miller Comprehensive High School, the story of Robin Hood is presented in a way in which classic meets comedy — and the audience is given a merry role as well.

"It's actually a Monty Python-themed play based off the classic tale of Robin Hood," said Aimee Struby, Miller drama teacher and director of *The Somewhat True Tale of Robin Hood*, an adaptation of the traditional story by Mary Lynn Dolan.

"Robin Hood goes through moments of awareness and life experiences that come about in odd and unique ways... It's all these obstacles that Robin Hood has to overcome in order to win Lady Marian's true love."

For example, she said, Lady Marian is flunked on school conditions and the Merry Men aren't too "with it," but they're there to help. The play fits with the classic storyline of Robin Hood having to help the Sheriff of Nottingham and win Lady Marian's hand, but the way in which these events unfold is humorous — by way of the Monty Python-like spin.

"The best way that I can explain it is that it's really eliminating the fourth wall

of a production. In this case, the characters are interacting with the audience, which is not that common with the production," Struby said.

"Many times when Robin Hood will have moments of epiphany... he'll make some moral statement and then clarify it with the audience, asking 'Did you get that? Well that's good.'"

In addition, there are instances in which the Sheriff refers to the audience as the people of England, and at one point a girl walks out with an "epiphany" sign to get the audience engaged in a tournament occurring in the play.

Struby said there were many Grade 12 boys that were interested in drama production this year, and a lot of them had backgrounds to improve. So when it came time to choose a play she said *The Somewhat True Tale of Robin Hood* was a

good choice because the students would be able to have fun with it and give it their own flair.

"A lot of times when we were doing rehearsals or dry run-throughs, I allowed them to do whatever they wanted — to be as extra as they could be as long as it didn't hurt anyone," Struby said.

There are no restrictions from people that are in the play.

Students from Grade 9 through 12 take part in the 46-person production, of which 20 are actors. Struby said due to the help of Regina Little Theatre, parent volunteers and a teacher as-

stant, the show's medieval costumes and set are amazing. And at the end of the show, the audience will be treated to a Men in Tights dance.

"If people are looking for something in which they can go and just have a good time and a lot of laughs, this is definitely the play," Struby said.

Robin Hood runs from Nov. 21 to 26 and the show begins at 7:30 each evening. Admission is \$8 for Nov. 21 and \$12 for the first show on Nov. 25.

Tickets can be reserved by calling Laura Moore at 799-7223. A portion of the proceeds from ticket sales will be donated to the Canadian Cancer Society.

THE SOMEWHAT TRUE TALE OF ROBIN HOOD
7:30 p.m., Nov. 23 to 25, Miller Comprehensive High School



Miller Comprehensive High School students rehearse *The Somewhat True Tale of Robin Hood* on Tuesday.



The Monty Python-themed take on the Robin Hood tale will hit the stage later this month.



Representation plays a role in the Miller production, which gives the play's characters a unique spin.

Henderson finds his way

CHRISTOPHER TESSMER
FOR THE LEADER-POST

Regina-based country artist Chris Henderson has taken the road less travelled pursuing his music career.

Now living in Regina, his 27-year-old Henderson has been performing since his teens, but a craft that has gained him significant notoriety locally and a foothold in the door nationally.

Helping him get to this point, the former school teacher has been propelled by two noteworthy contacts.

CRK's Big Country Talent Search and the *Doggy Style* "The Next Big Thing" — that have made a musical career more realistic, and more immediately sustainable.

"It's been instrumental," Henderson says, "no pun intended." "There's no question it has been a huge help as far as the media is concerned with exposure across Saskatchewan and

Most of the opportunities the up-and-coming frontman is currently experiencing wouldn't have been possible had he not resigned from his full-time teaching job this past June.

A couple weeks after the transition, Henderson hit a figurative bump in the road that would test his resolve.

"About 14 days to the day that I actually resigned," he recalls, "I was playing the pitch with some friends in a lounge here in Regina. I broke my wrist and had to have surgery, spending seven weeks in a cast. So it was a great start to being a full-time musician. I'm 27 now, and the last time I did a show without a guitar in my hand onstage was when I was 14 years old. I danced around onstage. In a cast, without a guitar, was definitely a new experience for me."

"Two of those people that look for signs in life for what we should or shouldn't be doing. For the first thing I did after resigning from my job was to limit myself to a little frustrating. I

had to cancel a few solo dates that I had planned, but everything comes as a blessing in disguise. At the time I certainly second-guessed it, but breaking

my wrist and having to sit around and heal this summer led me to spending a ton of time on the phone and computer, and as a result I've had a very busy

fall and a busy new year ahead as well.

"Breaking my wrist was definitely one of those things that turned out to be a blessing in disguise."



Artist's Chris Henderson is playing *The Whiskey Saloon* on Saturday.

YBCS marks 10 years with its performance of Alive

KELLY ANNE REISS
FOR THE LEADER-POST

The Youth Ballet and Contemporary Dance of Saskatchewan will be performing something old, something new, and something classic for its 10-year anniversary in a new concert called *Alive* that showcases excerpts from several ballet and dance pieces.

The new *A Secret Society* created by Connor McKee and Witekowski, the former artistic director of YBCS.

"It is set around our story of being dancers," dancer Katie Macdonald said. "One person is always the

stereotypical," added Jennie Nikkari, another YBCS dancer.

Witekowski prepared monologues for the dancers based on their own experiences in the ballet world.

"Being a dancer is sort of like being a part of a secret society," said dancer Michelle Korpan, who came on with the idea for the title cases excerpts from several ballet and dance pieces.

Performing monologues is something new for the dancers.

"We've used to working with our bodies," Korpan said, "but having to use our voices is a more vulnerable experience."

YBCS has done previously in set to the music of Queen and Mozart, who died at the age of 35.

"It challenges their lives," Korpan said about the ballet. "It's very joyful."

The YBCS classical selection is excerpts from Tchaikovsky's *Nutcracker*, including the Russian Dance, which is very upbeat, said dancer Julia Leskin.

"It's a lot of jumping around," she said.

"The music is very fun," agreed fellow dancer Nadia Molnar-Pinn.

Another excerpt includes *The Waltz of the Snowflakes*. The Nutcracker, Ballet for Life and A Secret Society

will be performed by the senior company.

Younger dancers in the junior company will be performing *Dreams*, *Caribbe*, a multimedia piece that melds ballet jazz, hip hop, modern and street dance into one.

The piece was choreographed by Connor Perry, Scott Scintinsky and renowned loop dancer Terrence Littlemore.

Dreams Catcher is about dealing with racism, Perry said.

Dancers will have to move around large set pieces that will be projected on.

"An extra challenge," Perry said. "But the girls

can pick things up pretty quickly."

The YBCS has been in rehearsal since August and the dancers are looking forward to sharing the show with a live audience.

"I add an extra energy," said Romano. Michelle Korpan is senior and fellow dancer about performing before a live audience.

After two performances at Ballet Theatre this week, the YBCS will be performing their Nutcracker excerpts with the Regina Symphony Orchestra on Dec. 5.

They will also be doing another performance with the South Saskatchewan Youth Orchestra on Feb. 12.

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