

ART • MUSIC • FASHION

PERFORMANCE • CUISINE • LITERATURE • DESIGN

Florida's
West Coast
Bi-Monthly

THE ARTISAN

MAGAZINE

FREE

July/August
2024



**FloridaRAMA Expands
Creates New Opportunities
for Arts & Summer Fun
INTERVIEW WITH LIZ DIMMITT**

LAC

COVER

FloridaRAMA



By Ashley Cantero

CONTENTS

- 6 **SELECT HAPPENINGS**
- 8 **PERFORMANCE ARTS**
- 12 **MUSIC** -Tony Castellano, Jr.
- 14 **INTERVIEW** -Liz Dimmitt/FloridaRAMA
- 18 **INTERIOR DESIGN** - Rob Bowen
- 26 **COMMENTARY** - Julie Haura
- 27 **ANNIVERSARY** - Michael Murphy
- 28 **SHOW REVIEW** -Flora & Fauna
- 30 **LITERATURE** -Heoric Jockey
- 31 **COMMENTARY** - Nancy Cohen
- 32 **"INDIGO" JONES** - Bob Devin
- 34 **ELDER ART** - Poetry



6



14



18



30

THE ARTISAN

MAGAZINE

P.O. Box 791, St. Petersburg, FL 33731

www.TheArtisanMagazine.com

813-842-3818

info@TheArtisanMagazine.com

CONTRIBUTORS



Robin O'Dell

Column writer and Editor
Director of the Florida Museum
of Photography Arts



Lisa Lippincott

Editorial Director - 30th Floor
Senior Executive assistant in
magazine production



Julie Haura

Writer & Gallery Owner at
Five Courts in St. Pete



**Deborah Dowbrook-
Kelley**

Artist, Marketing Director,
PWA, TAMPA, FL



Donna Sorbello

Florida Theatre, English
Majoring at University
College, Tampa



Linda Farrell

Journalist, Photo Editor,
Event Editor and public
relations specialist



Thomas Sayore Ellis

Award winning
Photographer/writer
Photojournalist, St. Pete



Bob Devin Jones

Florida artist
Producing Artists
Director of studio 4400



John Curtis/Mary Knoch

St. Pete arts supporters
Tom, Treasurer; Mary



Antonio Ferreira

Co-founder of Florida Art
and Communications Center
at Florida Architecture



Nancy Cohen

Artist at The Artisan, Inc.
Board member, St. Petersburg
PWA District, St. Petersburg



Larry Jaffe

Poet in Residence of
Jack Hammer House



SUBSCRIPTIONS



ADVERTISE



CALLS TO ARTISTS



JOBS IN THE ARTS

The Artisan Magazine is published every other month and is distributed to more than 300 businesses and artist studios throughout Pinellas, Hillsborough and Sarasota Counties.

submit articles, photos, events and news to:

info@TheArtisanMagazine.com

©2021 The Artisan Magazine. All rights reserved. The views expressed herein are not necessarily those of the publisher. Editorial submissions are welcome. Publisher reserves the right to reject or edit submissions for length and clarity. The Publisher is not responsible for errors or omissions. The Artisan Magazine reserves the right to reject or edit advertisements. The Artisan Magazine is not responsible for errors in advertisements beyond the cost of advertising space.

PLAYBILL PREVIEWS

MAHAFFEY THEATER
(ST. PETERSBURG)

BERT KREISCHER TOPS OFF

July 3 - 7

Get ready to laugh till you drop as the shirtless wonder, comedian Bert Kreischer, takes to the stage at the Mahaffey Theater with his "Tops Off" World Tour. Kreischer is recording his latest Netflix special, adding to his Netflix hits like "Rattle Dazzle" and "The Machine." Hailed by The Guardian as being named "one of the US's top stand-ups over the past decade," he is also the voice behind the mic on the chart-topping Bertcast and "2 Bears 1 Cave." And let's not forget "The Machine," his riotous film romp with Russian mobsters, which is still in the top 10 on Netflix. See the man, the myth, the machine in action.



VAN WEZEL
(SARASOTA)

SHREK THE MUSICAL

September 24 - 25

Join the audience for *Shrek the Musical*, a Tony Award-winner at Van Wezel that turns fairy tales upside down. Follow Shrek, an endearing ogre, and his witty sidekick, Donkey, on a quest to rescue Princess Fiona, outsmart a pint-sized tyrant, and reclaim the swamp. This musical masterpiece dazzles with vibrant sets, enchanting puppetry, and toe-tapping numbers, celebrating the beauty in diversity and the charm of the unconventional. It's a heartwarming, family-friendly adventure where laughter reigns supreme, and everyone gets their happily ever after.



STRAZ CENTER
(TAMPA)

THE BOY WHO LOVED BATMAN

October 1 - November 10

On stage at Straz Center is *The Boy Who Loved Batman*, a heartwarming comedy, "a peek behind the scenes of Batman's success," based on Michael Uslan's memoir. This world premiere chronicles a man's dream, from his humble beginnings in New Jersey to the glitz and glamour of Hollywood, transforming a comic book fascination into a cinematic legend of the silver screen and an iconic Batman film franchise. It's the tale of the unsung hero behind Batman's success.



POWERSTORIES THEATRE
(TAMPA)

IRENA'S VOW

July 10 - 21

In their season themed "Critical Social Issues Take Center Stage... Anti-semitism," Powerstories is bringing the powerful story, *Irena's Vow*, to Stegeworks Theatre. In the chaos of World War II, Polish nurse Irena Gut Opdyke defies the Nazis. The play recounts Irena's remarkable story of risking her life to save Jewish lives in German-occupied Poland. "Irena's Vow" celebrates the unwavering human spirit. Her courage resonates across time, reminding us that even in the bleakest circumstances, compassion and hope endure. Opening night features a VIP catered reception and a toast to the performance.



FREEFALL THEATRE COMPANY
(St. PETERSBURG)

FABLE

August 9 - September 8

Coming to freeFall's stage is Doug DeVita's *Fable*, a story that explores the differing memories of two legendary show business siblings, June Havoc and her sister, the burlesque star Gypsy Rose Lee. It's a behind-the-scenes look at the making of the musical "Gypsy," which Gypsy Rose Lee referred to as her legacy, told through the memories of an aging June. As she nears the end of her life, she reflects on the fierce tug-of-war with her sister. Their loyalty is tested in the hustle and bustle of theater life—from rehearsals to the final curtain call. It's a heartfelt struggle between what's real and what's made up, all for the sake of June's legacy.



ST. PETERSBURG CITY THEATRE
(ST. PETERSBURG)

PLAY ON!

September 20 - 29

Opening at St. Petersburg City Theatre is Rick Abbot's comedy, *Play On!* This is a hysterical story of a theatre group trying desperately to put on a play despite annoying interference from the snobbish playwright. Director Gerry is in a pickle with a play that's more comedy than mystery, a playwright who continues to revise the script, and a cast that's one sound effect short of an entire board. It's a wild ride to opening night, where mishaps are the main act, and the murder is missing in action. *Play On!* is a side-splitting tribute to the mayhem and magic of amateur theatre.



ONE-ON-ONE WITH FRANK-N-FURTER AN INTERVIEW WITH CLAY CHRISTOPHER

THE ROCKY HORROR SHOW AT JOBSITE THEATER

July 10 - August 4, 2024

Jobsite encourages fans to dress up and will sell a kit with approved props for the production.



By
Deborah
Bostock-Kelley
Deborah is a Tampa native and University of Tampa alumna, is a new columnist for The Artisan Magazine, a Watermark Online, a Florida Women Magazine reporter, and a Broadway World - Tampa theatre reviewer.



Despite groans from family members, Clay Christopher carries himself with an air of assurance in the iconic ensemble. He has been affectionately nicknamed "the brown Tim Curry" throughout his professional career and is fully prepared to embrace this legendary character.

Christopher gets real about stepping into Frank-N-Furter's platform shoes one-on-one with The Artisan Magazine.

How do you prepare for this iconic campy role?

I would say that I have been preparing for this role my whole life. I'm a fan of The Rocky Picture Horror. I was probably too young to watch it the first time I came across it, but I was in the room, and it was on TV. It looked interesting and fun. People were singing, dancing, and dressed weirdly. I just took to it immediately. To see Tim Curry, who quickly became one of my favorite actors of all time, play the role of Doctor Frank-N-Furter just opened my world up. I won't say that made me want to become an actor because I already knew at a young age that I wanted to be, but seeing Curry in this larger-than-life way showed me so many possibilities of what it could be like to be a movie star, to be on stage, and how much fun it could be.

What is your favorite musical number to perform, and why?

It absolutely has to be "Sweet Transvestite." That's Dr. Frank-N-Furter's big opening number and the first time we see him. It's about 15-20 minutes into the show - what a great entrance of that character. The setting of the show is in the 1950s. Until that moment when Bird and Janet walk into that giant scary house, everything is kind of very 50s normal, Norman Rockwell. Then all of a sudden, this man in giant heels and a corset comes



down an elevator singing rock and roll, talking about he's from a different planet, that he's a sweet transvestite - something so boldly against what's going on in the 1950s. It's one of the greatest songs in musical history, in my opinion, and one of the greatest character entrances. What a thrill it will be to get on stage and do that.

What aspect of Frank-N-Furter's personality do you find most intriguing to portray?

I find his undeniable charisma fascinating. He just exudes charisma out of every pore of his being. He's so positive about everything he's doing. He's so self-righteous and all-knowing.

How does Frank-N-Furter's character challenge traditional gender roles and expectations?

From the time that piece is set in - the 1950s - obviously, having a man dressed like that will stir many people up from that Norman Rockwell type of nuclear family dynamic. Whether you're talking about today's times or when the show came out in the 70s, he is completely unapologetic about how

he presents himself. He doesn't ask for acceptance. He demands it. And he doesn't see anything or anyone that does not accept him as he is. Talking about the norms of it all and the expectations, he doesn't give a flip about any of that, and that definitely goes against what anyone would expect.

How do you maintain your energy during the show?

I feel like I've been preparing for it my whole life. I've been doing things to change my body and my mentality to prepare for the role. I've lost a considerable amount of weight and have taken very good care of my voice. I have prepared myself mentally to work on mindfulness, meditation, and positivity. Even though the role looks like all fun and games, it can get to a very dark place very quickly. You have to maintain a balance in your mind and body, so taking care of my health will help my stamina and help my energy. And I have asked for rehearsal heels so I can start walking around my house in my heels.

What's your process for getting into character before a performance?

I know the character very well. I understand that even though he exudes all this confidence, a lot of times, it comes from a place of deep personal insecurity that Frank-N-Furter must feel but never shows. He is, in fact, a fish out of water. He's not of this planet. It's not a Tim Curry impression, but I definitely want to pay homage to him.

If Frank-N-Furter could have a spin-off story, what new adventures

would you like to see him tackle?

I would like to see him run for local office - mayor or city council. He would fit right in with our current demographic of politicians.

Have you discovered anything new about yourself through playing Frank-N-Furter?

I realize I can trust myself more than I gave myself credit for previously.

What should the audience expect?

I want them to expect to have a great time and leave other expectations at the door.

What do you hope the audience takes away from the Rocky Horror Show?

It's okay to be whoever the hell you want to be. *

