

The State of the Art: Area Theatre in 2008

Written by Mike Schulz

Wednesday, 17 December 2008 02:55

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There is officially too much theatre in the area.

Not for *me*, mind you. Just for this week's issue of the *Reader*. Although the print edition does feature the article "

[The](#)

[Essentials 2008: A Dozen Names to Remember](#)

," which hopefully provides a rough idea of the extraordinary wealth of talent found on the local stage scene in 2008, there was still plenty more that needed be said (and plenty more photos that needed be shared).

Consequently, RCReader.com also offers a more exhaustive - and potentially exhausting - look at 2008's theatrical achievements with three additional articles: "[Acting Class: A Dozen Memorable Performances](#)

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[Take Five\(s\): Ensembles, Pairings, Debuts, Technical Achievements, Shockers, and Accidents](#)

"; and "

[Summer's Stock: May through August with the Area's Seasonal Theatre Troupes](#)

." Plus photos. Lots and lots of photos.

So yeah, there's just a little too much theatre for print this week. And can I tell you a secret? There's almost too much theatre for me, as well. *Almost*.

Putting things in perspective: Last year, I saw 64 area productions; this year, I've seen 85, and that's not including a show that's yet to debut (the Harrison Hilltop Theatre's *Santaland Diaries*, opening December 20), and one show I attended a second time. There were so

many

offerings, in truth, that I couldn't make time to review them all, and had to resist the urge to share my thoughts on eight local presentations that ran only one weekend, including

Harrison Hilltop's

Independence

, New Ground Theatre's

A Body of Water

, and St. Ambrose University's

Seussical Jr.

(a production it was

killing

me to not write about, though you'll see its title mentioned several times throughout the year-end coverage).

But who's bitching? Twenty-one more plays and musicals this year just meant 21 more opportunities to be delighted by, and almost ridiculously proud of, the theatrical talent to be found in our area. So in addition to the venues and companies listed above, I hope you'll enjoy the *Reader's* print and online samplings of Augustana College, Black Hawk College, Circa '21 Dinner Playhouse, Clinton Area Showboat Theatre, Countryside Community Theatre, Curtainbox Theatre Company, Genesius Guild, Green Room Theatre, My Verona Productions, Playcrafters Barn Theatre, Prenzie Players, Quad City Music Guild, Richmond Hill Barn Theatre, Riverbend Theatre Collective, Scott Community College, and Timber Lake Playhouse presentations from 2008.

And I hope you'll continue to follow the *Reader's* coverage of the theatre scene into the new year, when you can expect more theatre reviews and

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views to debut online, and to debut sooner than they do presently. (No more of this pesky, we-gotta-wait-'til-Wednesday thing!) The

Reader

has plenty of surprises in store for 2009. If 2008's output is any indication, area theatre will, too.