



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
January 28, 2008



University
of Victoria

2007/2008 Season

FIND 2008:

Festival of Innovative & New Drama

3 **LIONEL** **THE MIRACLE MAN**

February 14 – 23, 2008

Can a song in your heart actually make you grow? Follow the 1920's Hollywood odyssey of the shortest tenor in history.

By Pan Bouyoucas
Directed by Ewan McLaren
An MFA Thesis Production

Set Design by Jennifer Quinn
Costume Design by Natasha Sharpe
Lighting Design by Nathan Brown
Music Direction by Candace Collin
Sound Design by Tim Johnston
Stage Manager Katt Campbell

Presented by

Dairyland

4 **THE SCHOOL FOR** **SCANDAL**

March 13 – 22, 2008

The gossip, intrigue and razor-sharp wit of this 18th century rings true in today's Hollywood and tabloid-driven world of celebrity.

By Richard B. Sheridan
Directed by Fran Gebhard

STUDIO SERIES

February 28 – March 1, 2008

Staged readings of plays by students in the Department of Writing, directed and read by Department of Theatre students.

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STEP RIGHT UP, LADIES & GENTLEMEN! **SEE LIONEL THE MIRACLE MAN. WATCH HIM GROW BEFORE YOUR EYES!**

Phoenix Theatre presents premiere production of new play.

Can a song in your heart actually make you grow?

Step behind the curtain, my good people and see Lionel, the world's shortest tenor – standing only 4'4" with a voice as big as a steeple. Watch his spirit grow as he journeys from rural Quebec to Hollywood stardom. Be amazed as his body grows to match his fame! Watch him inspire the people that he soon towers over!

Set in the 1920s amidst the spectacle of the sideshow and pageantry of celebrity, the Phoenix Theatre's third show of the 2007/08 season, **Lionel: The Miracle Man** (February 14-23, 2008) examines fame and its perils.

Although written in 1993, with a public reading at the Theatre d'Aujourd'hui in 1994, this is the premiere production of **Lionel: The Miracle Man**. The play won the *Prix TNM du théâtre épique* award in 1994 and was shortlisted for the 2003 *Herman Voaden National Playwriting Award*. The playwright came to Victoria in November of last year to participate in a workshop with the director and cast.

Interested in the process of directing a play that had never been staged before, MFA candidate director **Ewan McLaren** was taken with the title character's unstoppable spirit when he read Pan Bouyoucas' script. "It's a whimsical script that plays up our ideas of stardom, even when we empathize with the talented hero following his dream," says McLaren. "We've had lots of fun making Lionel's world a curious place where anything can happen."

This is McLaren's final production of his MFA program. He also directed last season's **The Street of Crocodiles**, as part of the Phoenix Theatre's Festival of Innovative and New Drama (FIND), and was Assistant Director for **Wind in the Willows** last November. He has worked extensively in Prague and with leading playwrights in Canada. **Lionel** is designed entirely by Department of Theatre undergraduate students with sets by **Jennifer Quinn**, costumes by **Natasha Sharpe**, lighting by **Nathan Brown** and sound by **Tim Johnston**. Music direction is by **Candace Collin**. The Stage Manager is **Katt Campbell**. The 10-member cast features **Carey Wass** in the title role with **Nicole Fraissinet** (Maggie), **Jason Moldowan** (Jake and the Reporter), **Sam Mullins** (Sunshine), **Bryan Nothling** (Father Ignace, Rosewater and Gaspar), **Shaan Rahman** (Newport, Moondog), **Natasha Salway** (Mother), **Katie Takefman** (Signora Eufema), **Kaitlin Williams** (Linda Brava) and **Chris Wilson** (Director, Worker, Emile). The play also features live violin accompaniment by **Pauline Edwards** and **Isaiah Bell** as vocalist.

Pan Bouyoucas is a novelist and a playwright who has received acclaim for his works in both English and French. His novel *L'Autre* was shortlisted for the Governor General's award and *Anna Pourquoi* won the *Prix littéraire des collégiens* award. Bouyoucas' plays *Kill the Music* and *Le Pourboire* were both awarded the Quebec Drama Festival's Screener's Award, and the latter won the *First prize of the Concours Radiophonique de Radio-Canada*.

Please join us for our **FREE Pre-Show Lecture, Friday February 15 at 7:00pm** with MFA director Ewan McLaren, who will speak about his experience of developing this new play from the script to premiere performance. This lecture is free of charge and open to everyone.

The performance schedule for **Lionel: The Miracle Man** at the Phoenix Theatre @ UVic is as follows:

Public Preview Performances 8pm: February 12 and 13

Evening Performances 8pm: February 14 (Opening Night), 15, 16, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23

Matinee Performances 2pm: Saturday, February 23

Single Tickets: \$10.00 - \$20.00 (Previews \$5.00)

Phoenix Box Office opens February 7 in person or by calling: **(250) 721-8000**.