

MCT's 'Damn Yankees' to premiere Friday night

By Patricia Sousa | Posted: Thursday, March 26, 2015 2:05 pm

The Tony Award-winning musical “Damn Yankees” will premiere at Mountain Community Theater’s Park Hall this Friday night, March 27, at 8 p.m.

This 1950s-era comedy about baseball, love, and the devil will be the first musical and fifth production directed by MCT’s Peter Gelblum.

“I wanted to direct a musical,” Gelblum explained. “This is the first musical that I have directed and figured I’d do something where I loved the subject matter and the music, so it is perfect.”

“Damn Yankees” runs about two hours long and will contain one 15-minute intermission, Gelblum said.

The story is based around Joe Boyde, who is a middle-aged man who sells his soul to the Devil to become the best baseball player who ever lived, and to help out his favorite baseball team, the Washington Senators, by beating the New York Yankees.

Once his wish of youth, fame, and glory are granted, he realizes that he misses what he left behind.

Gelblum said he listened to the “Damn Yankees” LP as a child and always enjoyed the music, his love of baseball also played into his choosing of the play.

“It’s about, in a nutshell, what would you sell your soul for,” Gelblum said.

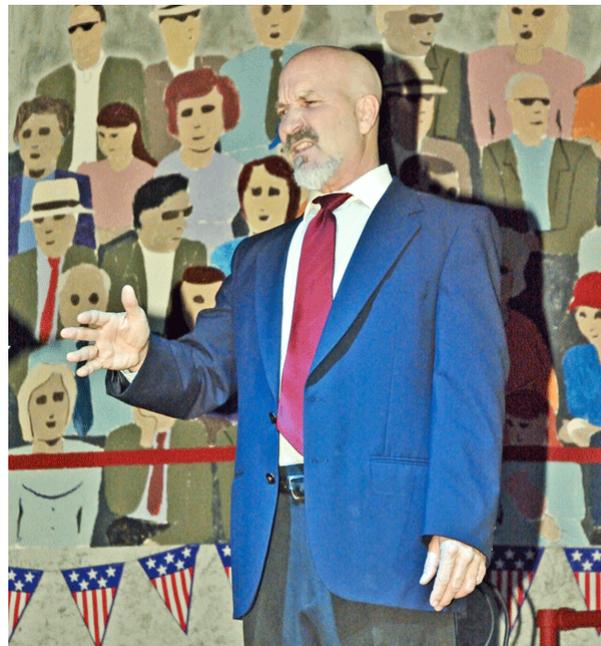
In the show, Joe Boyde transforms into the younger Joe Hardy — played by David Jackson — a star baseball player who can hit over .500, which is unheard of in all of baseball history.

“There is kind of a push-pull with Joe Hardy; he wants to be this baseball player, but at the same time he yearns for the life he left before him, his wife Meg,” Jackson said. “He loves the fame and fortune, but at the same time realizes he’s actually a homebody who wants to be home with his wife.”

Jackson said that he enjoys the camaraderie associated with the team-like aspect of baseball.

“Everybody has really come together to create team ‘Damn Yankees,’” Jackson said.

Shannon Marie Kerr, who choreographed the show and plays the part of Lola — the Devil’s beautiful and alluring assistant — has participated in MCT productions since she was 12 years old. As Lola, she tries to entice Joe into falling in love with her as part of the Devil’s ploy.



Mr Applegate

Steve Edmonds as Mr Applegate, in last Tuesday dress rehearsal of Mountain Community Theater's production of Damn Yankees, play based on the novel “The Year The Yankees Lost The Pennant” by Douglass Wallop.

“I like that Lola actually is very loving, she is seductive and manipulative at the beginning, but then you get to see another side of her,” Kerr explained. “She is really actually in love with Joe, which causes problems with her and her boss, the Devil.”

Although she has been actively involved in dozens of MTC shows, Kerr said that it has taken time for her to embody Lola's overtly sexualized character.

“It's a joy, I really feel congratulatory for people who have worked so hard on the dancing,” she said. “I am really proud of the results.”

The Devil, who goes by the name of “Mr. Applegate,” is played by Steve Edmonds who has worked for the MCT for over 30 years and has been involved in 60 or more shows.

“This role just really kind of seemed to fit, this is the largest on-stage part that I have ever had in my life,” he said. “It's really a fun show, we have some amazing talent, and I am really enjoying working with Peter Gelblum.”

Another participant of the 19-member cast is Mindy Pedlar, who plays the role of Joe's wife, Meg.

“My role is really fun because I get to have age-appropriate Joe, who is my real husband, and then young Joe and they are both fabulous actors gorgeous voices, and I have a duet with both of them,” Pedlar said.

The costumer, Alaina Boys, said that there are about 100 individual costume pieces for the show, some of which are her own.

“I am a little nervous and little excited, and it will be fun to see how the show works out,” she said during the “Damn Yankees” dress rehearsal.

Scott Kravitz, who has been with MCT since 2006, plays the part of the baseball player Sohovik and is the voice of the lively sports announcer in the show.

“Support live theater, there's a lot of it and it always needs support and it can be much more entertaining than screen time and not do anywhere near as much damage to your eyes, usually.”

For showtimes, or to purchase tickets, go online to <http://mctshows.org>.