

## TheatreZone has a varied season

The News Press - Fort Myers, Fla.

Author: AMY SOWDER

Date: May 15, 2010

asowder@news-press.com

When TheatreZone artistic director Mark Danni plans a season, he shoots for variety.

He'll hit the mark when the Naples equity professional theater group pulls the curtains for 2010-11, its sixth season, to reveal a timeless boy-meets-girl tale, a happy tap show, a haunting rags-to-riches story and a light flower-power musical review.

The group is in residence at the intimate 250-seat G&L Theatre, where no seat is more than 50 feet from stage.

The season includes "The Fantasticks," "No, No, Nanette," "Blood Brothers" and "Beehive."

Selections go with TheatreZone's mission to present the lost treasures of Broadway, as well as commission original plays and musicals with an eye toward regional production, Off Broadway and Broadway.

"It's really shows that aren't produced down here, and should be seen," says Danni, TheatreZone cofounder with wife and actress-choreographer Karen Molnar.

"We're a professional theater company so we're able to use pros, and do more challenging pieces that not many community theaters can do."

They're already in talks with actors, but the formal casting call will be in September.

One show - "I Love My Wife" - remains in the 2009-10 season; it will be presented in June. The Cy Coleman musical comically portrays the sexual revolution of the 1970s.

The musical takes place on Christmas Eve in suburban Trenton, N.J., where two married couples who have been close friends since high school find themselves contemplating a menage-a-quatre - two couples who want to plunge into liberated mutual sexuality but only manage to get their toes wet.

"It's PG-13, like 'Three's Company,'" Danni says.

The show opened 33 years ago, won two Tonys and ran for more than two years. The band won a Drama Desk Award for Best Supporting Actor in a Musical.

The show is June 10 to 12 at 8 p.m. and June 12 and 13 at 2 p.m. Tickets are \$38 to \$43.

"The Fantasticks" opens the 2010-11 season. The original production of "The Fantasticks" ran for 42 years and 17,162 performances with a legion of future luminaries such as Liza Minnelli, Glenn Close, Richard Chamberlain and John Carradine.

The moving tale of young lovers who become disillusioned, only to discover a more mature and meaningful love, is punctuated by catchy, memorable songs, most notably, "Try To Remember."

The play has 10 performances, Dec. 2 to 12.

"No, No, Nanette" has been acclaimed as "The Happiest Show In Town." The tap-dancing play that opened in 1925 had a huge revival in 1971, which started a nostalgia craze on Broadway.

Traditionalists will enjoy the singing and dancing of such classic hit songs as "Tea For Two," "I Want To Be Happy" and "Too Many Rings Around Rosie." The show runs Jan. 6 to 16.

Danni calls "Blood Brothers" one of the most powerful and haunting rags-to-riches musical tragedies of our time.

The triumph of "Blood Brothers" is that it had the courage to tackle the urban blight of Margaret Thatcher's Britain.

Its wonderful music helped "Blood Brothers" to run on Broadway for two years, get nominated for seven Tony Awards and win the Theatre World Award.

The show is March 5 to 15.

The season finale - "Beehive" - takes six wailing women and adds one hot band, 43 wigs, 40 costumes, 25 cans of hairspray and more than 40 of the greatest 1960s hits.

It includes songs by The Chiffons, The Supremes, Aretha Franklin, Connie Francis, Lesley Gore, Janis Joplin, Petula Clark and more.

The show is May 2 to 12.

2010-11 Season

The four-show season tickets are \$182, and individual seats are \$43 to \$48 plus a \$2 ticket fee.

A miniseries (3 shows) and group rates are also available.

The G&L Theatre is at The Community School of Naples campus, one block north of Pine Ridge Road at 13275 Livingston Road in Naples.

For more information or to purchase tickets, call TheatreZone at 1-888-ZONE-FLA, 1-888-966-3352 or order online at: [theatrezone-florida.com](http://theatrezone-florida.com).