

TheatreZone's new season includes local rarities

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When TheatreZone pulls the curtains for its sixth season later this year, the stage will reveal a timeless boy-meets-girl tale, a happy tap show, a haunting rags-to-riches story and a light flower-power musical review.

It all goes with the professional theater's mission to present the lost treasures of Broadway.

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

Here are more details about the upcoming season:

- "The Fantasticks" (Dec. 2-12) - The original production of "The Fantasticks" ran for 42 years and 17,162 performances.

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."

- "No, No, Nanette" (Jan. 6-16, 2011) - Critically acclaimed as "The Happiest Show In Town," the tap-dancing play opened in 1925 and had a huge revival in 1971, which started a nostalgia craze on Broadway.

It is a show that takes you back to the roaring 20s for some good, clean, tap dancing fun.

Molnar was really pushing for this one. "Of course, I'm a big tap dancer," she says.

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."

- Blood Brothers (March 5 to 15, 2011) - Danni calls this play 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 music helped "Blood Brothers" run on Broadway for two years, get nominated for seven Tony Awards and win the Theatre World Award.

This is one of those shows that require the talents of professionals, Danni says. The male vocals scale the heights.

"Blood Brothers" requires Liverpool accents and powerful pop-rock voices," Danni says.

The London production still runs today and is considered one of the top 50 musicals of all time.

- "Beehive" (May 2 to 12, 2011) - The season finale 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.

"Beehive" takes you through the entire decade of the '60s with girl-group songs," Danni says. "We're looking for not just singers, but I mean people who can really sell a song."

This is a high-voltage, fast-paced, lighthearted look back at songs by The Chiffons, The Supremes, Aretha Franklin, Connie Francis, Lesley Gore, Janis Joplin, Petula Clark and more.

2010-11 Season

- "I Love My Wife" is the last show of the 2009-10 season, running June 10 to 12 at 8 p.m., and June 12 and 13 at 2 p.m.; The Cy Coleman musical comically portrays the sexual revolution of the 1970s. Tickets are \$38 to \$43.

-The 2010-11, four-show season tickets are \$182, and individual seats are \$43 to \$48 plus a \$2 ticket fee.

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

-TheatreZone performs in the G&L Theatre 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.