National Recognition for Aurora’s Public Art

Women in STEM exhibit

NEW “GLAZE” FOR BICENTENNIAL ART CENTER

Spotlight
Robin Williams once said, “Spring is nature’s way of saying, Let’s party.” While the weather may not be encouraging that idea, February and March are definitely springtime for Aurora’s arts community with plenty to celebrate. Theatre continues to dominate Aurora’s cultural scene. Vintage Theatre’s production of “Billy Elliot, the Musical,” opens Feb. 3. This Tony Award-winner is based on the 2000 film and features music by Elton John. Also opening Feb. 3 at the ACAD Gallery Theatre is Theatre Esprit Asia’s production of “Yohen” celebrating Black History Month with a play exploring the intricacies of interracial marriage, culture and Japanese art. Phamaly Theatre Company, featuring performers with disabilities, presents George Bernard Shaw’s “Pygmalion,” opening Feb. 25 at the Aurora Fox Arts Center. This classic tells the story of Henry Higgins, a professor of phonetics, who bets his friend that he can pass off a poor flower girl with a Cockney accent as a duchess by teaching her to speak with an upper class accent. “Chinglish” opens March 24 at The Fox. Written by Tony Award winner playwright David Henry Hwang, “Chinglish” is a comedy about a struggling American businessman who finds himself in a provincial city in China, trying to win a contract to make signs for public buildings. The play explores the language barrier that separates the businessman from his Chinese counterparts who can make or break the deal.

But there’s so much more than theatre to celebrate. The Aurora History Museum is celebrating women in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) with a new exhibit. On Feb. 12, the Aurora Symphony Orchestra celebrates children with its free children’s concert, “An Animal’s Carnival.” A first-time concert experience and narrated in Spanish and English. The concert is 45 minutes of music, stories and great entertainment, including instrument petting-zoo and exciting special guests. The Aurora Singers celebrates its 40th anniversary with concerts March 4 and 5. You can’t say there’s nothing to do in Aurora!

The Bicentennial Art Center, formerly Lowry Air Force Base Building No. 1600, is recognized for its role in Aurora’s military and community history and for its distinctive Art Moderne architecture. Nowadays, it is also recognized as one of the area’s foremost pottery studios offering a variety of classes for all ages and abilities, including hand building, throwing on the wheel, specialty classes and workshops. Last year, it offered over 170 classes, totalling more than 2,000 contact hours with professional teaching artists. Open studio time is also available to experienced potters who do not wish to take a class but can work on their own without instruction, and for students who want to hone their craft at their own pace.

Constructed around 1938, the building accommodated radio transmission operations for the U.S. Air Force. In 1962, the property around it that later became Bicentennial Park was annexed into the city of Aurora, and in 1971, the city acquired the 1,640 square-feet building located at 13655 E. Alameda Ave. In 1978, the city announced the opening of its first art center, the Aurora Bicentennial Art Center.

Keeping equipment maintained and keeping up with ever changing best practices is a priority for its staff. Over the past year, the Bicentennial Art Center has undergone many improvements including a new burner and pulley system for the top hat kiln; two smart televisions and six new wheels for the studios; new shelves for the gas kiln and the electric bisque kilns; new ventilation system for the bisque room kilns; new top for the glaze table and new surfaces for the wedging tables; new shelf carts for the bisque room; and new lockers for students to store clay and tools.

The center staff would like to thank Pasta for Potters, the Aurora Potters’ Guild and the Scientific Cultural Facilities District for their contributions to these efforts.
Phillip Lomeo has performed in numerous musicals and plays throughout the Denver area since the age of 12. In 2009, he played Max Detweiler in “The Sound of Music” at The John Hand Theater in Aurora. While the upbeat and easy going character of Detweiler may be more fitting with Lomeo’s real life personality, he can easily transition into a more sinister role when cast as Jafar, the villain in “Aladdin.” Lomeo attended Grandview High School in Aurora and each year performed in the fall musicals. In 2014, he was thrilled to land his first role in Phamaly Theatre Company’s production of “Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat” to play Zebulon, one of the conniving, jealous brothers. Starring in Phamaly’s “Cabaret” and “Evita” further challenged his repertoire on stage. Next up: Phamaly’s production of “Pygmalion” at the Aurora Fox Arts Center. Lomeo has Asperger’s Syndrome and finds autismspeaks.org to be a great resource to learn more.

AC: How did you first get interested in theatre?
PL: From a young age, I’ve always been passionate about the performing arts. Seeing live theater in Denver and the surrounding communities piqued my interest in acting. I was swept away with the drama and music in the movies of yesteryear, namely, “West Side Story,” “Oliver” and “The Sound of Music.”

AC: What have been some of your most challenging theater assignments?
PL: One of my more challenging experiences on stage would be the dance scenes. Hats off to Debbie Stark and Ronni Gallup, Phamaly Theatre Company’s choreographers! Their expertise, talent and guidance has been a tremendous help.

AC: What do you love about the arts and culture in Aurora?
PL: I love the uniqueness of Aurora’s art scene. The Aurora Cultural Services Division offers drama classes for children and young adults. These opportunities serve as an excellent means to introduce the younger set to acting which they will hopefully pursue in the future. Whether your interests lie in the arts, sports or sciences, everyone should have some sort of outlet. Theatre provides an outlet for me which greatly enhances my life. Although I live with a disability, through acting I am able to connect with fellow actors and staff who are fun, supportive and share the same interests.

AC: What are your hopes for Aurora’s artistic growth?
PL: It’s great to see the revitalization of Aurora. The nostalgic ambiance of the Aurora Fox and other venues is an added bonus to the city. As our city continues to grow, I hope that marketing efforts and word of mouth will encourage people to patronize Aurora’s unique artistic community.

PHAMALY RETURNS to the Aurora Fox with

“Pygmalion” was chosen as part of Phamaly’s larger season that centers on classic tales retold through the lens of disability. “We are asking audiences to revisit the stories that they know and love and reimagine these characters in a new way,” said Executive Director Maureen Johnson Ediger. “Our performances aren’t just artistic adventure, they are also a great way to challenge perceptions and build upon these characters.”

The cast features a range of Phamaly performers – all living with a disability. This marks the 10th year of partnership between Phamaly and the Aurora Fox Arts Center to bring exciting theatre to the stage. Both organizations are committed to providing high-quality and unique performing arts that challenge perceptions and provide engaging stories for audiences.

For tickets and more information, visit phamaly.org.

Now in its 28th season of theatre, Phamaly Theatre Company will kick off 2017 with the wonderfully witty tale of “Pygmalion” at the Aurora Fox Arts Center, Feb. 23 through March 12.

Phamaly is bringing new life to this beloved tale written by George Bernard Shaw. The play may be more easily recognized by the musical it inspired, “My Fair Lady,” but Director Melody Duggan, who is making her debut with the company, finds much more modern relevance with the original play.
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>friday 3</td>
<td>Opening Night: “Billy Elliot, the Musical”</td>
<td>Vintage Theatre • 1468 Dayton St.</td>
<td>7:30 p.m. • $</td>
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<td></td>
<td>“An Animal’s Carnival”</td>
<td>Aurora Symphony Orchestra</td>
<td>3 p.m. • North Middle School Auditorium 12095 Montview Blvd. (Narrated in English and Spanish)</td>
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<td>“Yohen”</td>
<td>Theatre Esprit Asia ACAD Gallery Theatre 1400 Dallas St.</td>
<td>9:30 - 11 a.m. • $</td>
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<td>saturday 18</td>
<td>Ukulele Lesson and Hawaiian Culture Program</td>
<td>Aurora History Museum 15051 E. Alameda Parkway</td>
<td>1 - 3 p.m. • $</td>
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<tr>
<td>monday 20 &amp; 27</td>
<td>Women in STEM Special Event: Coding Workshop</td>
<td>Aurora History Museum 15051 E. Alameda Parkway</td>
<td>5:30 - 7 p.m. • $</td>
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<td>Wednesday 15</td>
<td>Lecture: Is that safe to give back? Removing potential contaminants from objects for safe repatriation</td>
<td>Aurora History Museum 15051 E. Alameda Parkway</td>
<td>Noon - 1 p.m. • $</td>
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<td>thursday 23 - saturday 25</td>
<td>Fine Arts Festival</td>
<td>Parkview UCC 12444 Parkview Dr</td>
<td>7:30 p.m. • $</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Black History Month with Cleo Parker Robinson Dance Ensemble</td>
<td>Aurora Fox Arts Center 9900 E. Colfax Ave.</td>
<td>Noon – 1 p.m. • $</td>
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**Lecture: The Refuge: Rocky Mountain National Wildlife Refuge**  
Noon - 1 p.m. • $  
Aurora History Museum  
15051 E. Alameda Parkway

**Saturday 4 & Sunday 5**

**“40 Fabulous Years!!!”**  
Aurora Singers  
Saturday, 7:30 p.m. • $  
Sunday, 2 p.m. • $  
East Middle School  
1275 Fraser St.

**Saturday 18**

**Ukulele Lesson and Hawaiian Culture Program**  
1 - 3 p.m.  
Aurora History Museum  
15051 E. Alameda Parkway

**Friday 24**

**Opening Night: “Chinglish”**  
7:30 p.m. • $  
Aurora Fox Arts Center  
9900 E. Colfax Ave.

**Sunday 26**

**“Arabian Nights”**  
Aurora Symphony Orchestra  
3 p.m. • $  
North Middle School  
12095 Montview Blvd.

**Friday 31**

**Opening Night: “The Intelligent Design of Jenny Chow”**  
7:30 p.m. • $  
Vintage Theatre  
1468 Dayton St.

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4. **Exhibit: “Celebrating Colorado: Women in STEM”**  
Aurora History Museum  
Through March 12

5. **Exhibit: “The Doctor Will See You”**  
Aurora History Museum  
Through May 7

6. **“Billy Elliot, the Musical”**  
Vintage Theatre  
Feb. 3 - March 19 • $

7. **“Pygmalion”**  
Aurora Fox Arts Center  
February 25 - March 12 • $  

8. **“The Intelligent Design of Jenny Chow”**  
Vintage Theatre  
March 31 - May 21 • $  

9. **“Chinglish”**  
Aurora Fox Arts Center  
March 24 - April 9 • $
NEW PUBLIC ART
Two New Sculptures Shine a Fresh Light on Aurora

The broad theme of color, light and motion, runs throughout the artworks that are being installed at the new R Line light rail stations that run through Aurora. Two new works of art by California artist Gordon Huether located at the Iliff Station platform and parking garage embrace this theme in a manner that literally harnesses environmental elements to bring the sculptures to life. While these sculptures are both physically constructed of aluminum and dichroic glass, they are actually completed by the backdrop of the Rocky Mountains, the intensity and motion of the Colorado sun and the winds of the high plains which act as vital compositional elements.

“On the Move 1” is a monumental 30-feet tall abstract representation of the Rocky Mountains which can be seen behind it. Small dichroic glass discs suspended between angular and dynamic aluminum shafts shimmer in the light of the sun and flutter in the wind while singing a gentle and soothing song, which can magically be heard over the chaotic sounds of traffic of I-225 and Iliff Avenue. The sound is reminiscent of river water traveling persistently over rocks and other obstacles and also the nature of gamelan music, the same, yet ever changing.

This sculpture is complemented by “On the Move 2”, a smaller sculpture, 15-feet tall, constructed of similar materials, except in this case the dichroic glass discs are much larger and they are fixed in place. The discs reflect the light of the sun onto the concrete pavement surrounding it, creating ever-changing patterns. These discs and their reflections capture a sense of movement as they morph throughout the day, responding to passing clouds and the progression of the sun from east to west.

Neighborhood residents and travelers through this station who pause long enough to take notice will find that they have a distinctive and delightful treat awaiting them in each day. These two sculptures will always offer something poetic and time-sensitive, gently reminding us of those qualities that make life here especially enchanting.

To learn more about the city’s Art in Public Places program, visit AuroraGov.org/PublicArt.

The New York Times placed Aurora among the “10 Places to See Public Art in 2017”
nytimes.com/section/t-magazine

ARTSPACE IN TOWN
For Pre-feasibility Visit

The city of Aurora has invited Artspace, America’s leading nonprofit developer for the arts, for a preliminary feasibility visit to the Aurora Arts District March 1-2. Artspace’s mission is to create, foster and preserve affordable space for artists and arts organizations.

Artspace will lead two days of tours, focus groups and meetings to assess the feasibility of developing an artist community with residential and working space in the arts district. The public is invited to attend the community meeting at 6 p.m. Wednesday, March 1 at Vintage Theatre, 1468 Dayton St.

Come learn about Artspace and contribute to the conversation about the potential for arts development in the city. For more information, please contact Jennifer Orozco at 303.739.7483.
ARTISTS: DISPLAY YOUR WORK

Aurora’s Art in Public Places Program is always looking for artists for a variety of projects, including public art commissions, serving on art selection panels and temporary exhibitions in the indoor gallery space in the Aurora Municipal Center – area open to schools, charitable organizations and veterans’ groups as well as individual artists; art must be displayed for a minimum of two weeks. If interested in temporary exhibits, please use the email address below and include your name, the media you work with, dates you would like to display and photos of your work. For the other opportunities, please contact us at publicart@auroragov.org or 303.739.6744.

ART CLASSES FOR ALL

Aurora’s Cultural Services Division offers a large assortment of arts classes for all ages and all abilities, including dance (many styles to choose from), piano, guitar, painting, drawing, pottery, acting and musical theatre. For more information, please check the Recreation Guide at AuroraGov.org/Recreation or pick up a copy at your local library.
"MYTH" AND "CHINGLISH"
Two Firsts at The Aurora Fox

After the success of “Porgy and Bess”—the best-selling performance in the history of The Fox—The Aurora Fox Arts Center continues its Life on the Margins of Polite Society season by taking us to remote places with two firsts: a world premiere, “Myth,” set in Yellowknife, Canada, and “Chinglish,” a regional premiere set in China.

“Myth,” a thriller written by Denver-based playwright and author Charles Wefso, explores the question of whether Bigfoot exists, the trustworthiness of storytelling and an intense relationship between two characters, one of whom must quickly come to an understanding about whether to perpetuate or protect the Bigfoot myth.

“Every person navigates or exists in a gray area between fact and faith,” said Fox Executive Producer and Director Charles Packard. “How much proof is required to convince you one way or the other? Fox theatergoers get to experience the intense conflict and emotion of an intimate relationship on stage, along with our unique ability to tell a story in an exotic location.”

“Myth” is playing through Feb. 19 in The Fox’s Studio Theatre.

“Chinglish” is a comedy about the challenges of doing business in a country where the language and underlying cultural assumptions can be worlds apart from those of the West. The play tells of the adventures of a businessman from the Midwest who arrives in a bustling Chinese province looking to score a lucrative contract for his family’s company. He soon finds that the complexities of such a venture far outstrip the expected differences in language, customs and manners—and calls into question even the most basic assumptions of human conduct. Through comic exchanges, he learns what is lost, and found, in translation.

“Chinglish,” playing March 24 through April 9, will be performed (mostly) in English. When Mandarin is used, subtitles will be provided. Tickets for both shows are available at AuroraFox.org or by calling the Box Office at 303.739.1970.