

Arts&Life

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SOMETIMES A CHILD'S VISIT WITH SANTA IS LESS THAN MERRY. We're looking to run your photos of kids who found their moment with Santa terrifying, not terrific. We'll publish a few on Monday, Dec. 24, and all of them online in a slide show at evtrib.com. Submit your photos (with a few lines about the who, when and where) by noon Thursday, Dec. 20. Upload them straight from your computer at evtrib.com in the "Happy Holidays" box or e-mail them to santapics@evtrib.com.

ON THE CALENDAR

HOLIDAY EVENTS

• "A Christmas Carol." A traditional dramatization of Ebenezer Scrooge's life-altering Christmas in a musical production. 7:30 p.m. today and Friday, 3 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. Saturday, Hale Centre Theatre, 50 W. Page Ave., Gilbert. \$16-\$25. (480) 497-1181.



• Handel's "Messiah: The Complete Oratorio." The Phoenix Symphony, the Phoenix Symphony Chorus and guest soloists are featured in this annual tradition. 7:30 p.m. today, Mesa Arts Center, 1 E. Main St. \$21-\$51. www.phoenixsymphony.org.

• Christmas concert. East Valley Youth Symphony will perform at 7 p.m. today, Mesquite Junior High School, 130 W. Mesquite St., Gilbert. Free. www.evsysz.org.

MUSEUMS

• Mesa Contemporary Arts. "Beyond the Cell" explores the influences of animation on contemporary art. 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. today, Mesa Arts Center, 1 E. Main St. Free today. (480) 644-6560.

• Scottsdale Museum of Contemporary Art. "Right to Print: Segura Publishing Company." This exhibition celebrates the rich achievements of Segura Publishing. 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. today. Free today. (480) 994-2787.

THEATER REVIEW

Unsatisfying 'Noise' may be Desert Rose swan song

By CHRIS PAGE
TRIBUNE

A sad spectre haunts Desert Rose Theatre's winter play, "Joyful Noise," though it's probably not apparent to anyone making a first foray to the 55-seat strip mall playhouse in west Mesa.

We die-hard devotees of Katherine Stewart's plucky classics troupe — those of us who've come to love the impoverished but clever productions inside Stewart's gritty, slathered-black storefront space — sense it all too clearly: A prohibitive rent hike, due next month, is sending the company into the streets after nearly three years there.

And so, come closing night of "Joyful Noise," a behind-the-music drama about composer George Frideric Handel's famed religious oratorio, "Messiah," Desert Rose will go on home-less hiatus.

You can't ask for a more triumphal swan song, if it truly becomes such, than the choral blast of "Hallelujah!" that punctuates the final moments of an otherwise uneven play. Utah playwright Tim Slover

'Joyful Noise'

When: 8 p.m. Thursdays through Saturdays, closing Dec. 29

Where: Desert Rose Theatre, 1320 W. University Drive, Mesa

Cost: \$15, \$12 for students and senior citizens

Information: (480) 452-9649 or www.desertrosetheatre.com

Grade: C

keeps a light, comic touch over what's otherwise a poor man's "Amadeus": Handel (played by Garry Myers) cranks out "Messiah" only after his last opera flopped royally — thus prompting one of Slover's characters to comment, "You're so unpopular, you couldn't get the clap."

Zing!

"Joyful Noise" — like Myers' performance, veiled in the honking German accent of Peter Sellers'

Dr. Strangelove — is at its best when droll. (Wild-eyed Gary Helmbold, too, is at his funniest as Handel's unwitting valet.) Slover's script tends to strike weak dramatic chords with seemingly more modern influences: At times, one is reminded either of "Footloose" — Handel's "Messiah," playing on stage rather than in church in the early 1740s, runs afoul of the headstrong Bishop Henry Egerton (John Caswell Jr., sharp here) — or, stranger yet, the musical "42nd Street."

Desert Rose's strength, its quixotic charm, comes when director Stewart and her band of community actors, possessing wildly varying degrees of talent, valiantly charge through great works of Shakespeare, Wilde and the like. Here, though, the script is too flimsy for the effort. (Another first: Stewart, casting herself as soprano Kitty Clive, overpowers her cast mates, vocally and actorly.)

Here's wishing that this unsatisfying coda isn't the final note from Desert Rose — that Stewart and company find a replacement venue pronto. "We're convinced that this little stumbling block in our history," Stewart writes in the playbill, "will prove to be a stepping stone to bigger and better things."

It had better. I'm at least keeping a hopeful space on the calendar for what's supposed to be the real season-ender, Shakespeare's "As You Like It," in April.

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DESERT ROSE THEATRE

WIG OUT: Troubled singer Susannah Cibber (Rebecca Johnston) and composer George Frideric Handel (Garry Myers) find redemption in the religious oratorio "Messiah," in Desert Rose Theatre's production of "Joyful Noise."



PHOTOS BY THOMAS BOGGAN, EAST VALLEY TRIBUNE

COMBO WORKOUT: Teacher Kendra Jordan, left, leads a Karve class Friday at K Pilates in Mesa. Karve is a workout that combines Pilates, yoga and ballet.

Karve it down

Valley residents shed inches with workout discipline at Mesa fitness studio

By KELLY WILSON
TRIBUNE

Twice a week, Judy Simonsen drives 100 miles round-trip from north Scottsdale to east Mesa to "Karve" her body. She makes the trek to K Pilates for Karve, a body-sculpting class taught by Kendra Jordan.

"Just doing that two hours of Karve a week has made a big difference for me," says Simonsen, 48, who has been taking the class for six months. "It's definitely a workout." She said it took six sessions before she noticed a physical difference.

"It has actually changed my body," she says. "It has made my clothes fit better. I lost inches. My abs are a lot tighter. I have a tighter seat and I have become firmer."

Jordan, 30, who has taught the class for six months, says Karve has been around for half a century.

"It's based off something called the Lotte Berk Method," says Jordan — a melange of strength training, dance, orthopedic back exercises and hatha yoga rolled into an intense hourlong workout invented by Berk, a German dancer. "It's really popular among women because it's an efficient workout. It gets your heart rate up and you burn fat — especially for women that are really busy and they want a great physique. They can do that with this one class."

"It gives you that long, lean dancer's physique, which is what women want."

Jordan first took the class three years ago in San Francisco, and was hooked.

"I had never done anything like it," she says. "I was really surprised with how intense it was. It kind of fills out the areas that Pilates may miss in terms of intensity and muscle burn. ... I was blown away by the result that I saw."

Jordan says that after seeing how popular Karve was in cities such as San Francisco, Detroit, Los Angeles and Boston, she decided to incorporate it into her studio.

"Every one of these studios had a really loyal following," she says. "I really wanted to bring something that was special and different out here."

Adriane Blewitt uses Karve as a method to help her train for next year's Olympics, where she'll compete in shot put.

"I'm using Karve as a workout for flexibility and strengthening," says Blewitt, 27, of Scottsdale. "My flexibility has increased tremendously and I've noticed it's helped out my training. ... I'm more aware of how to stretch my body where it's sore and how to identify the soreness."

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FAST RESULTS: "If you're not doing anything else, if you took the class four times a week, you'll see a change in a month," says Jordan of the class she teaches at Mesa's K Pilates.

Karve-ing practice

The schedule of Karve classes at K Pilates, 3514 N. Power Road, Mesa, is at kpilates.com.

Fee schedule: one class, \$20; three classes for new clients, \$45; five classes, \$95; 10 classes, \$180; 20 classes, \$340; 30 classes, \$480. An unlimited month of classes is \$100

for new clients, \$175 for returning clients.

K Pilates will hold a Karve boot camp beginning Jan. 14. Classes will be held at 7 p.m. Monday through Thursday, 7:15 a.m. Saturday. Cost: \$300.

Information: (480) 840-1860