

'Shrek' on stage, music and circus happening this week

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(Photo: Submitted photo)

A singing ogre, a folk-rock troubadour from the 1960s and a trio of contemporary pop/punk bands top the week's live musical offerings.

- Springfield Little Theatre opened its 79th season with a cockeyed look at Arthurian legend in "Monty Python's Spamalot." Now the classic fairy tale gets a humorous makeover via "**Shrek, the Musical**," a 2008 Broadway stage adaptation of the popular animated movie. In addition to Neil Diamond's "I'm a Believer," the Tony-nominated show features 18 new songs by composer Jeanine Teson ("Thoroughly Modern Millie") and lyricist David Lindsay-Abaire ("Rabbit Hole").

Lorianne Dunn directs and choreographs for SLT, with music direction by Susan Gravatt. Topping the cast of 53 are Lloyd Holt as Shrek, Jenna Murphy as Princess Fiona and James Brandon Martin as Donkey. Kid-sized versions of the unlikely lovebirds are played by Will Oliver (young Shrek), Madeline Popovich (young Fiona) and Cailee Spaeny (teen Fiona). Clayton Avery is the villainous Lord Farquaad.

Among the many children's book characters are Pinocchio (Weston Thomas), Peter Pan (Jordan Alexander), the Sugar Plum Fairy (Zoe Zelonky), the Wolf (Chris Jasinski), the Witch (Laura Cannici) and the Fairy Godmother (Dana Mirowski).

Performances are at 7:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday, April 10-12, 17-19 and 24-26. Matinees are at 2:30 p.m. April 6, 12-13, 20 and 26-27. For tickets (\$28, \$25, \$15), call the Landers Theatre at 869-1334.

- Folk luminary **Arlo Guthrie** kicks off a busy week at the Gillioz Theatre with a concert at 7 p.m. today. The singer-songwriter, son of the legendary Woody Guthrie, came to prominence with his 1967 album "Alice's Restaurant." The 18-minute title track, a whimsical spoken-word tale of a Thanksgiving Day celebration gone awry, became a surprise counterculture hit and inspired the Oscar-nominated film directed by Arthur Penn ("Bonnie and Clyde"). Guthrie played himself in the 1969 movie. His later successes included the paranoia-fueled "Coming into Los Angeles" and a Top 20 version of Steve Goodman's "City of New Orleans." For tickets (\$29.50-\$96), call 863-9491.

- Music with a harder edge is featured Saturday at the Gillioz when headliners **All Time Low** are joined by fellow pop-rockers **Man Overboard** ("Heart Attack") and Handguns ("Angst"). Formed in Baltimore a decade ago, All Time Low hit the Billboard Top 5 in 2009 with the album "Nothing Personal." "Dirty Work" charted almost as high two years later. The band's sound has been compared to Green Day, Third Eye Blind and Blink-182. All seats to the 8 p.m. concert are \$20.

- "**Love, Loss and What I Wore**" continues at Springfield Contemporary Theatre's Center Stage in Wilhoit Plaza, 431 S. Jefferson Ave. The off-Broadway success written by sisters Nora and Delia Ephron is directed for SCT by George Cron. The all-female ensemble consists of Adie Williams, Jessie Tasetano, Michele Granger, Andie Botrell and Nicole Boldt. Curtain time is 2 p.m. today and 7:30 p.m. Thursday through Saturday. For tickets (\$25 and \$22; \$10-\$12 student rush), call 831-8001.

- Today marks the final voyage of Missouri State University's "**The Pirates of Penzance.**" The classic Gilbert and Sullivan operetta plays at 2:30 p.m. in Craig Hall's Coger Theatre, 1147 E. Grand St. Director Ann Marie Daehn's cast includes Adam Grimes as Frederic, Elizabeth Klemm as Mabel, Jalen Lee as Major-General Stanley and Carl Glenn as the Pirate King. For tickets (\$18 and \$16), call 836-7678.

- For family fun under the big top, look to the eight-performance run of the **Shrine Circus** at JQH Arena, 685 S. John Q. Hammons Parkway.

Featured acts include Guiming Meng and eight other acrobats from China, "Human Cannonball" David Smith Jr., the "Magnificent Tigers" trained by Michael Ramos, and Ragtag Rascal the clown and his sidekick, Baby Bo.

Shows are at 7 p.m. Thursday; 11 a.m. and 7:30 p.m. Friday; 11 a.m., 3 and 7:30 p.m. Saturday and 2:30 and 6:30 p.m. April 6. For tickets (\$8-\$37 plus handling fees), call 836-7678 or go to www.missouristatetix.com.

Larry T. Collins writes about the performing arts for the News-Leader.