

Chateau does 'The Time Warp' again

By Rhonda Van Pelt

Want to help keep Manitou weird? Grab your red lipstick and fishnet stockings and head to the Iron Springs Chateau's production of "The Rocky Horror Picture Show."

The 1975 film, which starred Susan Sarandon and Barry Bostwick as a hapless couple who stumble into the lair of Dr. Frank-N-Furter (Tim Curry), has inspired unknown numbers of grown people to dress up as their favorite character and fling various objects at the screen.

This will be the fourth time the ISC has produced "Rocky," and ticket sales have grown each year, with the 2014 and 2015 productions selling out.

"We anticipate five nights of sold-out shows this year. We had people standing and waiting for 'no shows' last year to see if they could squeeze in the theater. We felt so bad when we had to turn them away," co-owner Rebekah Ratterree said.

The production, with multiple sets and props and eight actors playing nine characters, can be a tight squeeze for the theater's small stage.

"Our directors have to find exciting ways to stage and block just to make sure everyone fits on the stage properly. Plus, finding reasonably priced women's shoes size 12-14 to fit a man is a feat in and of itself," Ratterree said.

"Luckily, Noah Hensley, who directed our last two productions of



Parker Fowler as Dr. Frank-N-Furter looks out at the audience in the 2015 Iron Springs Chateau production of "The Rocky Horror Picture Show."

'Rocky,' laid an exemplary foundation of costumes, sets and props that allowed us to concentrate most of our efforts this year on building a fake elevator. We hope we can pull this one off."

This year's cast includes two "Rocky" veterans: Haley Hunsaker, reprising her 2015 performance as Columbia, and Daisya Downen, who played that role in the 2014 production. This time, Downen will appear as Riff Raff.

"That's an exciting choice by our director this year to cast a woman in a man's role. We can't wait to see how it will turn out," Ratterree said.

Chris Medina of Funky Little Theatre Company will direct the play and, in his role as master of ceremonies, will devise visual stimuli to keep the audience engaged while watching the movie and the live cast, Ratterree said.

The newcomers in the cast: Daniel Jenkins as Frank-N-Furter, Cara Marshall as Magenta, Garrett McCormack as Brad, Brittani Janish as Janet, Justin Weinzierl as Rocky and Kevin Morgan as Eddie/Doctor Scott. During each performance, four to five members of the wait staff will act as Transylvanians.

Behind the scenes, Lori Adams-Miller, Dolores Adams-Miller and J. Harbour will keep it all running smoothly.

As is traditional with "Rocky," the people in — and out of — the seats will play a huge role at each performance.

"The audiences have been awesome," Ratterree said. "Some will come as Frank-N-Furter, others as Brad, Janet or any of the characters in the show. Last year, Halloween fell on a show night, so costumes were a

IF YOU GO

"The Rocky Horror Picture Show" runs Oct. 21-22 and Oct. 27-29 at the Iron Springs Chateau, 444 Ruxton Ave. Doors open at 7:30 p.m. and the show starts at 9 p.m. It's rated R for mature audiences only; anyone younger than 18 must be accompanied by a parent. Tickets: \$15 plus tax. Information: 685-5104 or ironspringschateau.com.

wide range."

The audience's costumes will be judged by the applause of their peers, and the first through third prizes include free dinner and show passes, bar and concessions tabs and magnetic lips.

The first 25 people through the door receive free goodie bags; after that, they're \$2 each.

Because Ratterree and the other owners don't allow water guns or throwing rice or toast in the theater, they collect fake toast, light sticks, newspaper, toilet paper, playing cards and noisemakers for the bags.

"It can get kind of wild in our theater on 'Rocky' nights. Our audiences, so far, have joined in the 'Time Warp' each time it comes on and they always hold up their light sticks during 'There's a Light.' It looks so cool from the back of the theater," she said.

Why do all these people work so hard to share this bizarre experience with the audience?

"Live theater is a way to bring stories/messages/ideology/entertainment to the masses, and there is a magical edge to watching a live performance that will never be created exactly the same again," Ratterree said.

You have to wonder what messages "Rocky" sends audiences, but that's OK. It's all about keeping Manitou weird.

October is Arts Month, a Cultural Office of the Pikes Peak Region initiative to celebrate the performing and visual arts. Each week, the Bulletin will publish a story that focuses on a particular art form appearing on the Arts Month schedule. The second week highlights live theater. Information: www.culturaloffice.org or www.peakradar.com.

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