Iron Springs Chateau rolling out another ‘Rocky’

By Rhonda Van Pelt

They’re baaack! Like the swallows returning to San Juan Capistrano, the lovably creepy characters of “Rocky Horror Picture Show” can be counted on to return to Manitou Springs every October. This will be the sixth year the campy classic will be staged at the Iron Springs Chateau, and it’s a special time for everyone at the theater.

“We have a unique production of the ‘Rocky Horror Picture Show’ that we do try to change up every year. This year, as in years past, we are showing the movie on a screen to the left of the stage, while the cast is re-creating the movie using the entire theater,” said Rebekah Ratterree, ISC’s co-owner.

Daisya Downen is directing and choreographing this year’s production. The cast is Brenden Martinez as Dr. Frank-N-Furter, Davin Roark as Brad Majors, Krysten Whearly as Janet Weiss, Richard Sebastian-Coleman as Riff Raff, Trysten Park as Magenta, Dante Finley as Rocky, Haley Hunsaker as Columbia and Joseph Park as both Eddie and Dr. Scott.

Add a master of ceremonies and miscellaneous Transylvanians in the crowd, and the theater will be full of people doing the “Time Warp.” Ratterree and co-owner Lori Adams-Miller both dress in character and participate in that number.

Behind the scenes, the show couldn’t go on without the tech and set support crew.

“All of us have something to contribute to the world and some of us choose to do that through the arts,” Ratterree said.

“By supporting your local arts community through attendance and other avenues, you are actively participating in history. Someday that person you saw in a local community theater may be the next Julia Roberts or any other great musician, artist or performer.”

Cast members from the 2017 production of “The Rocky Horror Picture Show” gather on the set.

She said that ticket sales are booming, up 46 percent from this time last year. Tickets are still available, but the ISC management anticipates that the shows will sell out again this year.

“Live theater is a more personal experience than film for the audience, and allows for a broader range of actors to be able to practice their craft in the many community and professional theaters,” she said.

“I love live theater because of the immediacy of response from the audience. When you’re in a live show, you know instantly if that ‘bit’ worked by the response from the audience. Did they laugh? Did they cry? Or did they just sit there? There is no better way to hone your skills as an entertainer than to be in front of a live audience.”

Anyone in the audience on closing night, Oct. 27, is invited to participate in a costume contest, so grab your fishnet stockings and surgical gloves.

IF YOU GO

This year’s production of “Rocky Horror Picture Show” opens Friday, Oct. 12, and continues on Fridays and Saturdays through Oct. 27. Doors open at 7:30 p.m. and the curtain goes up at 9 p.m. You must be 17 or accompanied by an adult to attend. Goody bags are provided, so no outside food, water or props are allowed. Tickets are $20 plus tax, available at ironspringschateau.com or by calling 866-5572.

WHAT’S NEXT AT THE CHATEAU

The Iron Springs Chateau will host “Have a Very Merryville Christmas … or … Chris and Jingle to the Rescue.” The “hilariously funny melodrama,” written by Lori Adams-Miller, opens Nov. 16 and runs through Dec. 22. The audience is encouraged to participate in the melodrama, along with the holiday-themed intermission and a vaudeville-style holiday olio with skits and dances.

ISC is already planning a new melodrama, written by local playwright Sallie Walker, for February 2019. Local writers are encouraged to submit ideas for future melodramas. Email auditions@ironspringschateau.com for instructions.

Each October, the Pikes Peak region celebrates Arts Month as a way to elevate the visibility and importance of arts and culture in our community. The official call to action during Arts Month is to “have at least one new cultural experience with family or friends during the month.” The second week focuses on theater and film, the third on poetry, prose and comedy, and the fourth on music and dance. Information: PeakRadar.com/ArtsMonth.

It can be challenging to spread the word about what the Iron Springs Chateau team does; that’s a problem common to all small arts organizations, no matter where they’re located. But Ratterree loves working here.

“Mantius Springs is the perfect venue for live theater because we have such a diverse crowd in our audiences,” she said.

“From the tourist visiting in the summer to the local organizational Christmas parties or even the couple who just wanted a night out, they all make our performances better through the many different perspectives and responses they bring. We continue to learn and grow as performers because we learn to adapt to the diverse community that comes to our shows.”