

# 2019 Artistic Programming Highlights

## JANUARY

- *Curious George: The Golden Meatball* opens to much acclaim solidifying the need and demand for Theatre for Young Audiences programming.
- Michael directed and developed a co-production with Adventure Theatre/MTC in Washington, DC of a new version of the Huckleberry Finn musical, *Big River*, for Theatre for Young Audiences. This new version radically changes the show's perspective to be told more equally and thoughtfully from both the white and African-American experience while maintaining the heart and soul of the original musical and the novel it is based on. The new script was then performed in Milwaukee at First Stage and is slated to be at Lyric in the 2021 season.

## FEBRUARY

- The New Works Initiative production of *Girlfriend* opens at the Plaza. This show was done in collaboration with Signature Theatre in D.C. and received acclaim both in D.C. and in OKC. Lyric invited Diversity Organizers from the Oklahoma community to talk about the show and help invite LGBTQ groups to the show who might not otherwise have known about it.
- After each performance of *Girlfriend*, audiences stayed for talkbacks with the cast and creative team throughout the run.
- Auditions for the 2019 Summer Season were held, including auditions for the *Titanic* Choir.

## MARCH

- Lyric began to reach out to more diverse organizations in order to continue to become more inclusive, including joining the Black Chamber of Commerce and Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. Lyric also hosted a Hispanic Chamber meeting and shared a preview of *Bright Star*.
- *Bright Star* starring Bligh Voth and featuring a fantastic cast of Lyric favorites and new talent opened to positive audience response and became Lyric's first Plaza show to run for 4 weeks, aside from *A Christmas Carol* and *The Rocky Horror Show*.
- Michael went to the Olney Theatre in Washington, D.C. to workshop a new deaf/hearing production of *The Music Man*. The cast featured Lyric favorite Sandra Mae Frank, who performed in Lyric's productions of *Fiddler on the Roof* and *Fun Home*. The workshop was a huge success, gained national attention, and has developed into a co-production with Olney Theatre and Lyric Theatre. The show will premiere at Olney in the summer of 2021 and continue on to Lyric Theatre immediately afterwards.

## APRIL

- All spring long, Lyric hosted Ignition Arts theatre company in residence. They held readings and workshops of new plays directed by Ashley Wells, Lyn Cramer and others. Their mission is to entertain, educate, and enlighten audiences with exciting world premieres and innovative explorations of classic works.
- Lyric staff participated in the Oklahoma City Marathon with two relay teams.
- Michael directed the national finals of the Poetry Out Loud competition in Washington, D.C. organized by the Poetry Foundation and the National Endowment for the Arts.

## MAY

- Filming with Spark Creative took place for the silent movie sequences for the upcoming production of *Singin' in the Rain*.
- Michael and Ashley directed and choreographed the first Kelli O'Hara awards honoring high school musical theatre at the Civic Center.
- Lyric also produced and directed the first Student Share for the Disney Musicals in School program featuring 5 elementary schools at the Civic Center.

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## MAY (continued)

- Michael attended the William Inge Theatre Festival in Independence, Kansas, where he offered feedback to playwrights on their new work.
- Michael visited the Titanic Museum in Branson, MO, which led to a strong relationship for the upcoming production of the musical, *Titanic*.

## JUNE

- *Singin' in the Rain* wows audiences at the Civic Center! Kudos to Team Production for actually making it rain (with no leaking) on the stage!
- Michael and Rachael Crawford Leonhart went to the MUNY theatre in St. Louis to learn more about community access and group sales initiatives.

## JULY

- Disney's *Newsies* is a dance and scenic spectacular at the Civic! Kudos to Ashley and everyone who made this show soar on every level!
- *Titanic* breaks records as the largest show ever produced at Lyric. With the OKC Philharmonic lead by maestro Alexander Mickelthwate and a chorus of over 70 singers featuring members of Canterbury Voices, the show highlighted our mission to promote collaboration among the arts.
- Actual artifacts from the *U.S.S. Titanic* were on display in the Civic Center lobby for patrons to get a deeper understanding of the hope and tragedy the ship represents. Many thanks to the Titanic Museum and Mary Kellogg in Branson, MO for their support of the production and lending Lyric these valuable historical artifacts.

## AUGUST:

- *Frost/Nixon* begins rehearsal on the first day using 4 live cameras and a 28 foot LED screen to create a technologically immersive experience like Lyric has never done. Kudos to all involved in making this new technology work so well in telling the story in a new way.

## SEPTEMBER

- *Frost/Nixon* opens to rave reviews and after each show fostered thoughtful conversations with the audience. Many of our patrons remembered this time in America and offered insights into the Presidency today.

## OCTOBER

- *The Rocky Horror Show* opens to record-breaking houses. The tradition of producing a new production every three years continues. Many thanks to Jimmy Moore and Hui Cha Poos for leading this interactive hit.
- Michael attends the Oregon Shakespeare Festival to audition for the season and the new Native American musical *Distant Thunder*. He also met with playwright Octavio Solis about his new play, *Mother Road*.
- Ashley, Jim, and Michael went to the National Alliance for Musical Theatre conference and new works festival in NYC. Board members and guests joined them for the festival, Broadway shows featuring backstage meet and greets, and networking events with other theatre board members from around the country.

## NOVEMBER

- The Broadway Ball featured a reunion of cast members from Lyric's production of *A Little Night Music* with a performance by Broadway star Emily Skinner. Charlotte Franklin and Jane Hall were inducted into the Lyric Creative Hall of Fame and the McDaniel family received the Kirkpatrick Award for their commitment to Lyric and the arts in Oklahoma.
- The 9th anniversary production of Lyric's *A Christmas Carol* opens the day after Thanksgiving and breaks attendance records.

## DECEMBER

- Lyric's *A Christmas Carol* has a wonderful holiday run while raising money for the Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma after each performance.