

COMMUNITY

THEATER PRESENTATION

Shuler farce aims for high L.P.M. (laughs per minute)

By Tim Keller
Correspondent
The Chronicle-News

RATON – Director Blake White says the Shuler Theater's new comic production of "Boeing Boeing," opening a two-week run Thursday night, aims for pure fun and pure laughter. "There's no hidden agenda or meaning," he says. "It's only about being funny."

Bernard, played by Ian McCabe, is an American architect living happily in Paris while juggling three fiancés, all of whom are airline stewardesses. When Boeing Airlines introduces faster jets, it throws off Bernard's delicately balanced timing and provokes chaos in his life. That's precisely when Robert, his old college friend played by Darren Hill, arrives unexpectedly to reboot his own life.

"Robert gets swept up in Bernard's chaos," White says, "but through it he gradually transitions into more of a Lothario than Bernard is. Darren Hill walks on stage and he's on a roller coaster ride for the next two hours. He handles it with great aplomb."

The comedy takes place during a single day. "It's the completely unrealistic world of 'door farce,'" White says. It exists solely for laughter.

"Boeing Boeing" was launched in 1960 as a French farce by Marc Camoletti. Two years later the English language version debuted in London where it played non-stop for seven years. It reached Broadway in 1965, the same year a Tony Curtis-Jerry Lewis American film version was released.

Successful revivals on London's West End in 2007 and Broadway in 2008 have given the play new life that's brought it to Raton.

The Shuler cast has been living and working together all summer. "We're out to find two hours of comedy," White says. "That's our M.O. The play is deceptively difficult, fulfilling the saying, 'Drama is easy, comedy is hard.'"



Tim Keller / The Chronicle-News

Blake White (left) and Ian McCabe are actors and friends who don't always see eye to eye, but they're great at creating comedy together. Last summer's Shuler Theater production of "The Importance of Being Earnest" (photo) introduced the pair to local audiences. Thursday night, the rollicking farce "Boeing Boeing" opens a two-week Shuler run starring McCabe and directed by White.

This close to opening, he's knows they've got it. "We have six very funny roles and six very funny people to play them. It's a true ensemble piece where all six actors get their moments of great comedy."

The 1960s setting predates political correctness—flight attendants were still stewardesses and the term "women's liberation" was still a decade away—but that adds to fun. Bernard's three stewardess-fiancés are Gretchen, a German played by Nora Leahy, Gabriella, an Italian played

by Bussy Gower, and Gloria, an American played by Cassie Thompson.

Adding to the complications is a fourth woman, Bernard's sassy French maid played by Tamara Todres. "All four women are equally gorgeous and equally hilarious," White says.

Adding some depth to the proceedings, "Boeing Boeing" also turns out to be a love story. "Bernard is truly in love with one of his fiancés," White says, "and Robert falls in love-at-first-sight with another. There's a

chance—just a chance—that they'll all ride off happily into the sunset together."

The Santa Fe School for the Performing Arts, in conjunction with Two Pigs Productions, presents "Boeing Boeing" at the Shuler Theater Thursdays through Sundays, July 23 through August 2. Evening shows begin at 7:30 p.m. Sunday matinees start at 2:30 p.m. General admission tickets are \$20 for adults, \$15 seniors and \$5 children, available at the theater, 131 N. 2nd St., (575) 445-4746, www.shulertheater.com.

Tai Chi offers help for arthritis sufferers

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Steve Block / The Chronicle-News

Shirley Donachy demonstrates basic low-impact exercise moves as the class follows along in the "Tai Chi for Arthritis" program at the Mt. Carmel Health, Wellness and Community Center on Monday.

thritis, but the participants tell me they enjoy the benefits of being in the tai chi program. These are low-stress exercises that are very easy on a person's body."

Multiple studies have shown that the careful, disciplined exercise, which originated several thousand centuries ago as a martial art, can improve balance, reduce stress and offer arthritis pain relief.

A study released by researchers at Tufts Medical Center in Boston, Mass., found that tai chi can specifically reduce the pain and physical impairment of people with severe knee osteoarthritis, according to the website: www.arthritis.org/living-with-arthritis/exercise/workouts.

Those results were no surprise to one of the biggest proponents of tai chi for people with arthritis, Dr. Paul Lam, a family physician in Sydney, Australia. Dr. Lam developed arthritis as a teenager growing

up in China when malnourishment caused cartilage development problems. He began practicing tai chi to ease his arthritis pain, eventually modifying the popular Sun style of tai chi to make it easier for people with arthritis.

"A lot of people with arthritis don't know they can do tai chi," he says. "Even though the Sun style is slow and gentle, it does have high-risk moves as well. That's why we modified it. We took the part that was more effective for healing and put in modification so that anyone could do it."

For the millions of adults and children across the United States who are impacted by the effects of arthritis, programs like the tai chi classes offered at the Mt. Carmel Center can help offer some blessed relief. The center offers tai chi classes throughout the year, which are taught by several certified instructors.

TRAVEL WEBSITE LISTING

Trinidad ranked as fifth worst place to live in Colorado

By Nick Ruybalid
Correspondent
The Chronicle News

Travel website roadsnaacks.net listed Trinidad as one of the worst places to live in Colorado based off of population density, unemployment rates, home values, median income adjusted for the cost of living, education, and crime data from the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Nick James, author of the article, writes, "If you're going to drive to New Mexico, Trinidad would be the last place you'd see on I-25 before you crossed the state line, and there really isn't much of a reason to stop unless they have great deals on weed. People who have jobs earn meager livings and home prices are way below average, and there's just not a lot to do except smoke the weed you just bought."

James further notes that Trinidad's average household income is \$34,590, average home value is \$121,600, unemployment rate is 7.7 percent and population is 9,032, a factor he finds important as he assumes that a lower population density means that there are fewer things to do. He did not specify how education and crime played a role in his determination of ranking despite listing them as significant earlier.

While roadsnaacks.net may list Trinidad as the fifth worst place to live in Colorado, theculturetrip.com hails it as one of the top ten most beautiful cities in the state and lonelyplanet.com lists Highway 12 as one of Colorado's best scenic drives. The goal of roadsnaacks.net is to show the "real side of places that not everyone wants to hear."

Top Ten Worst Places to Live in Colorado, according to roadsnaacks.net are:

- | | |
|--------------------|--------------|
| 10.) Greeley | 5.) Trinidad |
| 9.) La Junta | 4.) Montrose |
| 8.) Cortez | 3.) Alamosa |
| 7.) Stratmoor | 2.) Delta |
| 6.) Grand Junction | 1.) Pueblo |

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