

The
5280
Fall Arts
AND
Entertainment
GUIDE

The very best creative offerings around Denver this season. PLUS: A closer look at some of the most innovative artistic minds in the Front Range.

BY JULIE DUGDALE & LUC HATLESTAD

DANCE

November 5

» **So You Think You Can Dance** The show's 10 finalists perform, including Aurora native Kayla Radomski • *World Arena, Colorado Springs, \$35.50–\$53, www.worldarena.com*

November 21

» **Vertical Migration** Lemon Sponge Cake Contemporary Ballet world premiere with guest artist Rachel Viselli • *Newman Center for the Performing Arts, \$34.50, www.lemonspongecake.org*

December 4–5

» **The Nutcracker** The legendary Moscow Ballet does fellow Russian Tchaikovsky proud with this exquisite production • *Paramount Theatre, \$27.50–\$100, www.nutcracker.com*

December 4–6, 11–13, 18–20

» **Granny Dances to a Holiday Drum** Cleo Parker

Robinson Dance's festive show re-creating "Granny's" memories of world holiday celebrations • *Newman Center for the Performing Arts, \$38, www.cleoparkerdance.org*

December 11–13

» **Worlds of Fantasy** Disney on Ice presents a colorful montage of kids' classics • *Denver Coliseum, \$15–\$72, www.disneyonice.com*

January 9

» **An Evening of Stars** The National Ballet of Denver performs highlights from the world's classic ballets • *Ellie Caulkins Opera House, \$15–\$73, www.nationalballetofdenver.org*

January 26

» **Pilobolus** Strength-performance dance with contortionist choreography, reminiscent of Cirque du Soleil • *Newman Center for the Performing Arts, \$28–\$48, www.pilobolus.com*

February 12–14

» **Love. An Internal Affair.** Ballet Nouveau's Valentine's Day show flush with



DANCE

Beside the Pointe

Ballet Nouveau Colorado's artistic director pushes dance beyond tutus and tradition.

BALLET NOUVEAU COLORADO'S Garrett Ammon's brought his contemporary artistic vision from Memphis to Denver two years ago because he saw an ideal city in which to test people's perception of ballet. The result? Performances such as this month's *Intersection* (Nov. 1 at the Lakewood Cultural Center; Nov. 6–8 at the Performing Arts Complex at PCS, Federal Heights), a collaboration with the Light-house Writers Workshop that blends words with dance. Here, 5280 gets Ammon's take on the "philosophy nouveau" and a peek at the upcoming show.

So, is this actually ballet?

In the entire company we have 12 professional dancers, all classically trained. We take rules, guidelines, and structures and look for new ways to bend them. To [uninitiated] viewers, it might not look like ballet. We've stripped away traditional expectations. We like to think of it as getting down to the core.

Was it difficult to sell something so avant-garde in Denver?

Most Denverites don't give themselves enough credit. I've been incredibly impressed by the wide array of art here. This city is growing into one of the most important centers for cultural exploration in the country.

Tell us about *Intersection*.

It explores a young man who inexplicably leaves his world, not knowing where he'd been or who he is. We're going to be merging poetry and dance, and we're working on putting in some projection work—very multimedia. But we'll continue to focus on dance itself. I want people to see how much dance can touch, move, and inspire us.

Intersection (November 1), Lakewood Cultural Center; (November 6–8) Performing Arts Complex at PCS, Federal Heights, \$16–\$42, www.bncdance.org

WHEN GIGS FLY

Boulder's aerial dance troupe kicks into high gear (literally) for the holiday season.

LOW-FLYING TRAPEZE, fabric acrobatics, and daredevil hoop tricks—it all sounds like a circus act. But for Nancy Smith, founder and artistic director of Frequent Flyers Productions (FFP) in Boulder, the concept is more "modern dance meets aerial arts in a hybridization. We broaden horizons, introduce people to a new art form, and draw an audience that may not like modern dance but loves what we do."

This season, FFP will be performing the new *Swing Into the Holidaze* (Dec. 11–13, 18–20) at the Dairy Center for the Arts in Boulder. Set to, you guessed it, swing music and tunes from Ger-shwin's *An American in Paris*, the show choreographs inventive equipment acrobatics—think bungee cords and stilts—to a



lively soundtrack. Says Smith: "People won't be able to see something like this anywhere else."

Swing Into the Holidaze (December 11–13, 18–20), Dairy Center for the Arts, Boulder; also performing with the Colorado Springs Philharmonic Orchestra to *An American in Paris* (January 9); ticket prices TBA; www.frequentflyers.org

DANCE continued

romance and scandal • *Performing Arts Complex at PCS, Federal Heights, \$8-\$42, www.bncdance.com*

February 19-28

» **Beauty and the Beast** A modern take on a classic tale • *Ellie Caulkins Opera House, \$19-\$129, www.col-oradoballet.org*

February 26-27

» **B.Y.U. International Folk Dance Ensemble** A multi-cultural whirlwind of dance from around the world • *Lincoln Center, Fort Collins, \$10, www.fcgov.com/lectix*

February 28

» **Danzón** Contemporary Latino dance company Luna Negra, the Turtle Island Quartet, and composer Paquito D'Rivera perform the official dance of Cuba • *Mackay Auditorium, Boulder, ticket prices TBA, www.lunanegra.org*

FILM

Through November 12

» **INK** Colorado-based Double Edge Films brings its urban-fantasy sci-fi hit back to Denver for another run • *Starz FilmCenter, \$7.50, www.doubleedge-films.com*

Tattered Cover Film Series

» Explore the realm of classic film with Colorado Public Radio film critic Howie Movshovitz • *Starz FilmCenter at the Tivoli, free, www.tatteredcover.com*

» **November 7**
Green for Danger

» **December 5**
An Evening with Buster (and the boys)

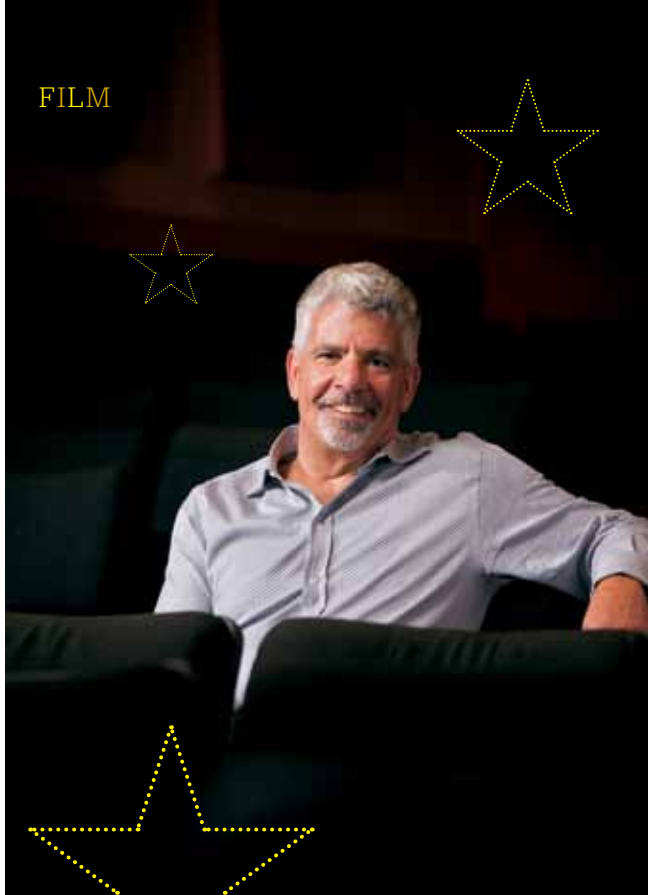
November 11-15

» **Warren Miller's Dynasty** Kick off ski season with the most intense sports action film of 2009 • *Paramount Theatre, \$24, www.paramountdenver.com*

November 15

» **The Mark of Zorro** The

FILM



Starz Aligned

After a season of controversy, the Denver Film Society's new executive director looks ahead.

WHEN TWENTY-PLUS STAFFERS, including top management, quit the Denver Film Society (DFS) in June because of unresolved tension with a new executive director and the board of directors, anxious questions arose among local movie lovers. What about Film on the Rocks? Will there still be a Denver Film Festival this year? Do we have to catch our movies at—gulp—the local multiplex?

A little less than a month later, the organization replaced its director, Bo Smith, with a new boss, Tom Botelho; all the departed employees returned to their posts; and festival planning resumed. Botelho was far from an outsider. He's been on the Film Society's board for 13 years, has more than 20 years in the advertising business, and spent 11 years in marketing positions at the *Denver Post* and Denver Newspaper Agency. What compelled him to take on the DFS full-time? "There wasn't a lot of convincing to be had," he says. "I love this place. We live in a very evolved city. [Mayor John] Hick-enlooper is really a big believer in the culture class."

Botelho says the Film Society's 2,000-member core audience is 40 to 60 years old, so his first priority is to diversify. The DFS plans to lure students with free screenings and hip film programs, plus a partnership with the University of Colorado Denver's College of Arts & Media. The group is creating an enhanced WomenPlus film program to attract movies by, for, and about women, and DFS is also hoping to draw more Hispanic interest for this year's Starz Denver Film Festival by focusing on Mexican cinema and collaborating with Aurora's Cinema Latino, which will provide Spanish-language films.

With presales putting the Starz festival on target to follow last year—the most well-attended festival in its history, with more than 42,000 attendees—and other international cinema programs lined up, such as December's highly stylized Japanese screenings, a Film Society that seemed to be teetering on the edge a few months ago has righted its ship. The multiplex, thankfully, can wait. (Nov. 12-22, www.denverfilm.org)

original 1920 silent film, accompanied by the Mont Alto Motion Picture Orchestra • *Lakewood Cultural Center, Lakewood, \$14, www.lakewood.org, www.mont-alto.com*

Listen Productions

» This Colorado-based company produces socially conscious indie flicks; catch these at the Buntport Theater (www.listenproductions.com):

» **November 20-21**

A Test of Wills • \$10, www.atestofwills.com

» **November 19, 22**

DNC Mediamockracy • \$10, www.dncmediamockracy.com

FINE ARTS

Through December 31

» **A Visual Alphabet and Drawings, Anyone?** The former is a collection of works from the end of Herbert Bayer's career; the latter showcases multiple media—from pencil to pastel—of numerous contemporary artists • *Denver Art Museum, www.denverartmuseum.org*

Through January 3

» **Streams of Modernism** Tracing the influences and development of modern design through both an exhibition and lecture series • *Kirkland Museum of Fine and Decorative Art, www.kirklandmuseum.org*

Through January 10

» **Barnaby Furnas'** exhibition of massive, abstract "Flood" paintings • *MCA Denver, www.mcadenver.org*

Through January 10

» **The Masterworks of Charles M. Russell** This major retrospective of one of the first true "Western" artists will include more than 60 pieces of Russell's work, including paintings, mixed media, and bronze sculpture. • *Denver Art Museum, www.denverartmuseum.org*



MISS INDEPENDENT

A Denver movie maven goes big with her latest film.

DARLA RAE, the 51-year-old CEO of Denver-based Film-It Productions, began her career as a young extra in the original *Halloween*. Decades later, Rae's films have drawn raves for their contribution to the betterment of society. Most recently, *The Goal*, which follows two athletes as they rebuild their damaged bodies and spirits after devastating accidents, earned several awards on the independent film circuit. Her next major production, *Section B*, began shooting last month for a projected early-spring release. The loosely autobiographical dramedy depicts an ensemble of Baby Boomers who relegate their lives, families, and careers to the back burner to pursue their dreams by attending a prestigious acting academy.

The film will open on 1,000 screens—most indie films debut on seven to 10—and includes scenes at local businesses such as Il Posto and the Whole Foods in Centennial. As of press time, Rae was holding a role for *Britain's Got Talent* overnight sensation Susan Boyle, and she had signed rocker Cyndi Lauper, longtime actress and model Tippi Hedren, *American Idol* heartthrob (and Denver native) Ace Young, and socialite Marla Maples, not to mention cinematographer William Fraker—a six-time Academy Award nominee.

"People ask, 'How'd you get Cyndi Lauper?'" Rae says. "I just asked. I think that sometimes inhibits independent filmmakers. If you don't ask, the answer is always no."

Through January 16

» **Here and There** Arlene Shechet's exhibition of cast-paper works that speak to different senses of place • *MCA Denver*, www.mcadenver.org

Through February 24

» **Salon of Light (*Salotto di Luminoso*)** Presents works by 19th-century Italian artists as well as pieces from local Italian-American artists • *The Madden Museum of Art*, www.themaddenmuseum.org

Through March 28

» **Allen True's West** A three-part exhibition at the Denver Art Museum, the Colorado History Museum, and the Denver Public Library. The DAM will feature True's oil paintings. Drawings from his time as an illustrator will be shown at the Library, and the History Museum Society will display three of True's murals • *history.denverlibrary.org/AllenTruesWest*

December 4–January 9

» Psychologist and photographer **Joseph Juhasz** and artist **Rori Knudtson's** installation examines the concepts of home and longing. The pieces document their respective homelands of Budapest and Norway • *Ironton Studios and Gallery*, www.irontonstudios.com

January 21–February 27

» **Take Five** Four ladies and one guy—all of whom are established artists—present a mixed media exhibition • *Plus Gallery*, www.plusgallery.com

BOOKS

January

» **American Victory** (Celebra Hardcover) *Henry Cejudo* and *Bill Plaschke* Follow wrestler Cejudo, now of Colorado Springs,

What's The Big Idea?

Colin Livingston's work evokes our consumer culture with irony, wit—and just a little bit of hope.

EVEN CASUAL ART FANS recognize Andy Warhol's iconic Campbell's soup cans or Roy Lichtenstein's comic book–like paintings. This December, a homegrown heir to these illustrious Pop Art practitioners is exhibiting right here in Denver.

Thornton-based Colin Livingston will showcase his "Post-Pop" sensibilities in "The Big Idea" at LoDo's Plus Gallery (December 4 to January 15). The exhibit mimics a retail store, with display racks, signage—even a cash register. The "products" are Livingston's graphically sleek and colorful paintings and sculptures, boxed up as if on sale at a big-box store. "I want it to be really overwhelming, like buying something in Wal-Mart," Livingston says. "That environment can be soulless and commercial, but it also can have the style of fine art."

Livingston grew up in Arvada and attended the Rocky Mountain College of Art and Design, where his paintings mostly evoked somber impressions of his late mother, who committed suicide when Livingston was in the fifth grade. Over time, his message became more positive, as evidenced by his finishing flourish for "The Big Idea" pieces. Each one comes with six interchangeable stick-on logos with phrases such as "I Love You" or "Take Care"—seemingly trite clichés of positivity that Livingston, who became a first-time father of twins this summer, wishes people would heed more readily. "The phrases are life lessons from tragic events or moments of epiphany," he says. "It's about trying to remember and hang onto them."

This element of audience participation is what moves Livingston's work into the "Post-Pop" category. "[He's] pursuing a more complex level of engagement," says Plus Gallery owner and director Ivar Zeile, who has hosted three previous Livingston exhibitions. "He is definitely taking Pop Art into a new direction by allowing collectors to 'collaborate' on a painting to make it their own."

Colin Livingston, "The Big Idea," December 4–January 15, Plus Gallery, 2501 Larimer St., www.plusgallery.com



BOOKS continued

on his journey from South Central L.A. to Beijing and an Olympic gold

February

- » **The Routes of Man** (Knopf) *Ted Conover*
The Pulitzer Prize finalist (a Manual High School grad) on roads and their influence on the landscape and modern society
- » **Black Hills** (Reagan Arthur) *Dan Simmons*
Historical fiction from a longtime Front Ranger, *Hills* is the tale of an American Plains Indian who is possessed by General George Custer's ghost after he touches the dying general's body at Little Bighorn
- » **Wild Penance** (Berkeley Hardcover) *Sandi Ault*
Get lost in the rugged West in the fourth novel of Ault's award-winning mystery series
- » **To Hell on a Fast Horse** (William Morrow) *Mark L. Gardner*
Cascade-based Gardner chronicles the Wild West

escapades of Sheriff Pat Garrett and Billy the Kid in this cops-and-robbers tale of banditry and murder

MUSIC

November 5

- » 23-year-old piano virtuoso **Yeol Eum Son**, winner of the Silver Award at this year's Van Cliburn International Piano Competition • *Lakewood Cultural Center*, \$26, www.lakewood.org/comres/page.cfm?ID=18&LakewoodCulturalCenter

November 7, 10, 13, and 15

- » Opera Colorado presents **The Tales of Hoffmann** at the Ellie Caulkins Opera House. The French masterpiece returns to Opera Colorado for the first time in 25 years • *Ellie Caulkins Opera House*, For ages 10 and older, \$30-\$160, www.operacolorado.org

November 15

- » **Young@Heart Chorus**
A "rowdy" bunch of senior citizens who cover a variety of contempo-

rary musicians, from Jimi Hendrix to OutKast to Radiohead • *Wells Fargo Theatre*, \$25, www.youngatheartchorus.com

November 16-17

- » Denver hosts indie-rock pioneers **the Pixies** in a two-night engagement, a celebration of the 20th anniversary of the band's seminal album, *Doolittle*, which it will perform in its entirety, including B-sides. The tickets will likely be gone by the time you read this, but as any indie fanatic knows, there's no such thing as a sellout • *The Fillmore Auditorium*, \$50-\$62.50, www.livenation.com

November 17, 18

- » **Ray LaMontagne** The soft-spoken singer-songwriter embarks on a tour that gives a portion of ticket sales to various charities • *Ellie Caulkins Opera House*, \$30-\$45, www.ticketmaster.com

November 17

- » **Rebel (Ensemble for Baroque Music)** plays music from 17th- and 18th-century Spain • *Newman*

Center for the Performing Arts, \$28-\$48, www.du.edu/newmancenter

November 20

- » **Denver Philharmonic Orchestra** performs Mozart's Symphony No. 21, Rodrigo's Aranjuez and Vivaldi's D major guitar concertos, and Tchaikovsky's melodies from "Romeo and Juliet" • *KPOF Hall*, \$20, www.denverphilharmonic.org

December 2

- » Revered contemporary cellist **Yo-Yo Ma** plays one night only • *Boettcher Concert Hall*, \$35-\$125, www.coloradosymphony.org

December 4-6

- » University of Colorado's **Holiday Festival** at Macky Auditorium in Boulder features seasonal favorites played by the College of Music's choirs, orchestra, ensembles, and faculty soloists • \$12-\$52, www.cupresents.org

December 13

- » **TubaChristmas**: Just one of many TubaChristmas concerts taking place across

FOR THE LOVE OF LITERATURE

How Denver's Ghost Road Press evolved from a niche business into a regional publishing star.

FIVE YEARS AGO, Ghost Road Press was a blip on the literary radar as Denver's newest independent publishing house. At first, founder/publisher Matt Davis was looking for the kind of writing not deemed marketable at bigger houses, and 10 titles a year were all he could handle. "We were poetry and literary fiction," Davis says. "We were kind of viewed as a Western press—authors from the Rocky Mountains. Now, I get submissions—close to 100 a week—from all over the world."

With manuscripts filling his mailbox and an ambition to become a literary hub in Colorado, Davis has more than 20 titles slated for release this year. It's not quite Random House, but what GRP lacks in international name recognition, it makes up for in integrity. "When people get a GRP book, I want them to know that there's something of value there—that the production is top notch and the content is compelling," Davis says.

Here, we look at three of the titles on deck at Ghost Road Press—the little publisher that could.



Heroes Fight Like Greeks, Ronald J. Drez (October 20)
The Gist The courageous and little-known Greek resistance to Nazi takeover during World War II.

American Affairs, John Clark Pratt (December 10)
The Gist Pratt's first novel in a decade is a political work about the Portuguese Carnation Revolution in the mid-'70s.



Dear Dr. Thompson: Felony Murder, Hunter S. Thompson and The Last Gonzo Campaign, Matthew L. Moseley (February 1)
The Gist Moseley, in a commentary on injustice and a critique of then-district attorney Bill Ritter, recounts Hunter S. Thompson's crusade to free Lisl Auman from a lifetime in prison, sentenced for a crime she didn't commit.



BOOKS

Action Packed

Longtime Coloradan and best-selling author Clive Cussler's newest thriller, *The Wrecker*, hits shelves this month.

THEY CALL HIM the Grand Master of Adventure. The 78-year-old Clive Cussler, author of more than 40 best-selling action novels, called Lookout Mountain home for 30-plus years until he moved to Arizona in 1991. But with frequent sojourns to his Telluride getaway, plus the Cussler Museum in Arvada—his vintage-automobile shrine—the author's presence lingers in the Centennial State. This month, look for *The Wrecker*, a historical crime thriller about the rowdy West. Recently, *5280* caught up with the tireless Cussler to talk shop.

Give us a sneak peek into *The Wrecker*.

I've written all these sea stories, so I thought it'd be fun to do a Western. It went so well that the publisher wanted a series. The plot started out in the 1950s, but I moved it to 1906 so I could get in the old cars and trains and locomotives. Then we put it in San Francisco so we could get in the earthquake and fire.

How are you different from other writers?

I consider myself more of an entertainer, and I try to make the reading fun. If the action slows down, I'll start the next chapter with dialogue. I always try to do something other writers don't.

You use a lot of maritime lore in your stories, yet you've made your homes in landlocked Colorado and Arizona.

I'm out on the sea one or two months of the year. In July, I was out on the North Sea; we've been looking for a number of years for the USS *Bonhomme Richard* wreck.

Any plans to cap your pen—er, keyboard—for good?

I have joked about this. I'd like to retire, but they won't let me. I'm 78. I'm not going to be around forever. But I'm obviously never going to retire.

the globe. Denver's holiday performance includes hundreds of tuba players from the region • *Skyline Park, free, www.tuba-christmas.com/readtclloc.php?TCState=CO*

December 15

» Part of the CSO Holiday Series, the **Duke Ellington Orchestra** plays holiday favorites and Ellington classics • *Boettcher Concert Hall, \$15–\$75, www.coloradosymphony.org*

December 18

» **Denver Philharmonic Orchestra's** holiday concert • *KPOF Hall, \$20, www.denverphilharmonic.org*

December 31

» Ring in the New Year with **Lannie Garrett's Great Women of Song**, including pre- and post-show fireworks displays outside the cabaret • *Lannie's Clocktower Cabaret, \$125, www.lannies.com*

January 15

» The legendary **Vanguard Jazz Orchestra** • *Newman Center for the Performing Arts, \$28–\$48, www.du.edu/newmancenter*

January 22–24

» CSO Masterworks presents **Mozart Extraganza** • *Boettcher Concert Hall, \$15–\$75, www.coloradosymphony.org*

January 23

» **Denver Philharmonic Orchestra's** chamber music benefit concert • *KPOF Hall, \$20, www.denverphilharmonic.org*

February 13

» CSO Pops presents Broadway star **Michael Cavanaugh** singing tunes by Billy Joel, Elton John, Jerry Lee Lewis, and more • *Boettcher Concert Hall, \$15–\$75, www.coloradosymphony.org*

February 19–20

» The **Mile High Voltage Festival** features tunes from artists of the Cantaloupe Music label • *Newman Center for the Performing Arts, \$18 (individual show), \$38 (festival*

pass), www.du.edu/newmancenter

February 19–21

» **Mid-Winter Bluegrass Festival** Featuring performances by more than 15 bands, beginner jam sessions, and music workshops • *Northglenn Ramada Plaza, \$22–\$57, www.seamanevents.com/midwinter*

February 24

» **Russian National Orchestra** Featuring 22-year-old Chinese pianist Yuja Wang performing Beethoven's "Emperor Concerto" • *Newman Center for the Performing Arts, \$28–\$88, www.du.edu/newmancenter*

February 27

» **Turtle Island Quartet** Grammy Award-winning group that plays classic jazz tunes with chamber instruments. For this performance, the band will play the music of John Coltrane • *Lakewood Cultural Center, \$28, www.turtleislandquartet.com*

THEATER

November 7, 12, 14

» **Vox Phamalia: Re-Dux** An original show by the members of the PHAMALY troupe that examines what it's like to live with disabilities • *Mizel Arts & Culture Center, \$5–\$10, www.phamaly.org*

Through November 14

» **The Winterling** Jez Butterworth's tale of mystery, suspense, and despair set in a lonely English farmhouse during the dead of winter • *Paragon Theatre, \$19, www.paragonthatre.com*

November 5–7, 11–15

» **Philistines** A prerevolutionary Russian drama that delves into the lives of a parochial bourgeois family to explore timeless themes of childhood rebellion • *University Theatre, \$15,*



MUSIC

Lofty Ambitions

Esmé Patterson on Paper Bird's rise.

WITH TWO RECENT EP RELEASES, a second full-length album on the way, and a busy live show schedule, Paper Bird—Top Local Band in 5280's 2009 Top of the Town issue—is becoming one of the most ubiquitous and influential noisemakers along the Front Range. Fronted by vocalists Sarah Anderson and sisters Genny and Esmé Patterson, the seven-piece band uses a wide range of influences to create its harmonious and folky sound. Earlier this year, Esmé Patterson chatted with us about the band's past, recording its latest album, and its future plans.

What musical influences led to the band's sound?

Our dad always sang, and our grandfather was an opera singer. We were raised listening to Motown. Between the seven of us in the band, we listen to everything, from reggae and AC/DC to Hanson—really—to classical jazz. We never planned to sound “like this.” It's hard to explain, but there's no premeditation whatsoever. Not to get really New Agey, but we're communicating on some level we can't explain.

What's it like to start up a band in Denver?

Everybody's just helping each other by inviting you to play shows or sing on their record. There's this community that's so involved, and everybody believes in each other. The Flobots did that for us. Talk about a weird musical pairing! But every time we play with them we make a bunch of new fans. It is a smaller city, and the scene is so localized, and there aren't that many venues.

When can we expect to see your second full-length album?

Very soon. We've got all the songs recorded, and now we're embellishing. We'd love to get it out, but we have such a tendency to rush things. I'm really excited by this one; we're trying to give the songs the time they deserve.

www.paperbirdband.com

THEATER continued

www.colorado.edu/theatre-dance/theatre/productions.html

November 13–December 19

» Absurd Person Singular

A 1972 play by Alan Ayckbourn that documents the changing fortunes of three married couples at Christmas • *Space Theatre*, \$18–\$53, www.denvercenter.org

November 13–December 20

» **Fully Committed** A one-act comedy that follows an out-of-work actor working the phones at a top Manhattan restaurant • *Aurora Fox Arts Center*, \$24, www.aurorafox.org

November 14–December 5

» **Ameriville** A post-Katrina examination of New Orleans that combines poetry, music, and storytelling by the renowned Universes troupe • *Curious Theatre Company*, \$18–\$42, www.curious theatre.org

November 19–December 20

» **The Christmas of the Angels** A Shadow Theatre Company original production that features the Aurora Symphony Orchestra and the Scripture-inspired nativity story told from the point-of-view of three watching angels • *Shadow Theatre Company*, \$26, www.shadowtheatre.com

November 27–December 20

» **A Christmas Story** The infamous holiday movie is adapted for the stage. All Ralphie wants is a damn Red Ryder BB gun! • *Aurora Fox Arts Center*, \$24, www.aurorafox.org

November 27–December 26

» **A Christmas Carol** makes its annual return to the DCPA • *Stage Theatre*, \$18–\$53, www.denvercenter.org

December 1–13

» **Spring Awakening** A Tony Award-winning musical that's been called a “groundbreaking fusion of morality, sexuality,

and rock and roll” • *Buell Theatre*, \$25–\$100, www.denvercenter.org

December 4–7, 10–14, 16–21

» **The SantaLand Diaries** David Sedaris' account of working as an elf at Macy's is adapted for the stage. One of the Bug Theatre's signature pieces, it draws huge crowds • *Bug Theatre Company*, \$23–\$26, www.bugtheatre.org

December 26–27, January 1–2

» **Midnite Martini's Winter Burlescapades** The 15-member burlesque troupe at Lannie's Clocktower Cabaret presents a racy holiday celebration “not suitable for the ultraconservative or underage” • *Lannie's Clocktower Cabaret*, \$30, www.lannies.com

January 9–February 13

» **Home By Dark** Terry Dodd's latest work showcases his local roots. Set in Boulder on a snowy morning in 1986, it reveals long-held secrets between a father and son. The drama had its first reading two years ago at the national Parents, Families, & Friends of Lesbians and Gays conference in Washington, D.C., and, in Dodd's words, “took off from there.” • *Curious Theatre*, \$18–\$42, www.curious theatre.org

January 14–31

» **Barefoot in the Park** Neil Simon's classic romantic comedy as staged by the PHAMALY theater troupe • *Aurora Fox Arts Center*, \$24, www.phamaly.org

January 22–February 27

» **When Tang Met Laika** Explores the relationship between the Russian and American space programs and their efforts to build an international space station. Toss in a love story and characters like a stray dog and a ghost, and you've got the makings for a pretty creative tale • *Space Theatre*, \$18–\$53, www.denvercenter.org

Ramblin' Man

The peripatetic artistic director Kent Thompson finds a home in Denver.

ARTISTS ROAM. They go where inspiration, impulse—and, of course, job openings—steer them. This fall, Kent Thompson begins his fifth year as artistic director of the Denver Center Theater Company, following 16 years at the renowned Alabama Shakespeare Festival. Before settling here, he roamed, teaching theater at Juilliard and Boston University, and working in, among many other places, North Carolina, Virginia, New York, Canada, and England.

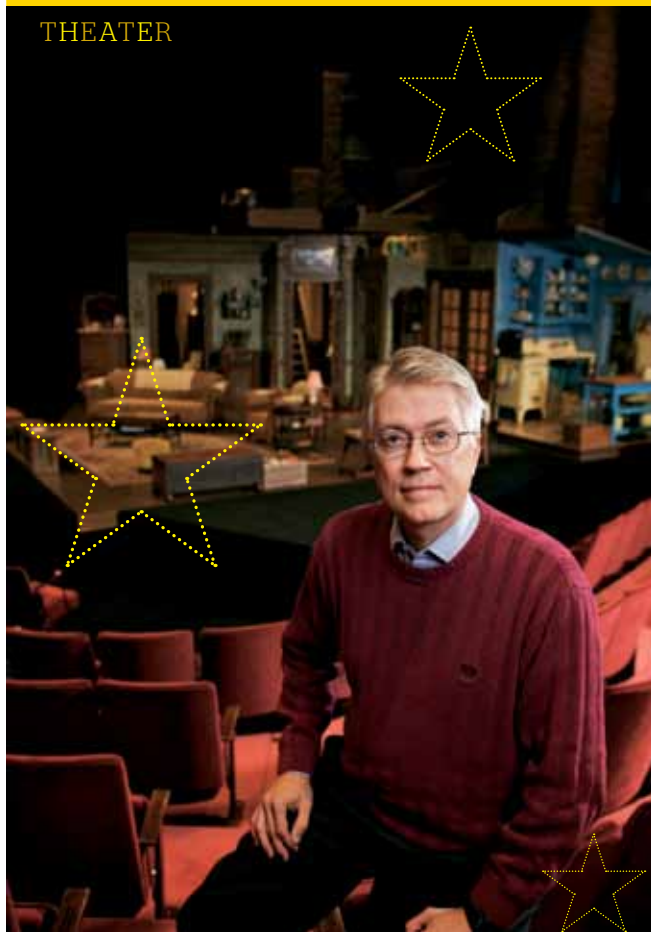
Under Thompson, the DCTC is developing a national reputation, particularly for works written by nontraditional playwrights. Thompson established the Women's Voices Fund, an endowment that commissions new plays by women. "In the 26 years before I got here, [the company] had presented about 250 plays, only seven written by women," Thompson says. Today, among the top 10 to 15 plays produced nationally each year, about 40 percent are written by women, a much higher rate than a few decades ago. "Women are writing plays that men can't and don't write," he says. "These aren't just 'chick flick' kind of plays. Their imaginations, issues, stories, and voices are different, so it's an interesting time for women in theater."

The DCTC applies the same principle to recruiting more African-American and Latino-written plays, primarily via its annual New Play Summit. Two of this season's highlights will be *Well*, by Lisa Kron, a funny, touching look at a mother-daughter relationship tested by the mother's ill health, and *When Tang Met Laika*, by Rogelio Martinez, a fanciful love story set amid the Cold War.

For Thompson, plays like these, and the DCTC's varied lineup speak to local audiences in their own language. "Our shows often look at what it means to be an American in an increasingly global world. We want there to be a regional aspect to it," he says. "I think our perspective on America and the world from the base of the Rocky Mountains is just different and unique, and I want the plays to reflect that."

For a complete listing of this season's performances and ticket options, go to www.denvercenter.org.

THEATER



THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT MUSICALS

Ever wish your favorite movie were sung? The Buell Theatre's got you covered.

WICKED

Through Nov. 15

The Grammy and Tony award-winning play returns to Denver for the third time. Previous tours of the play broke box office records and sold out in record time in the Mile-High City. *Buell Theatre*, \$35-\$135.

LITTLE HOUSE ON THE PRAIRIE: THE MUSICAL

December 15-27

Laura Ingalls Wilder's story of pioneer America, reincarnated as a musical. *Buell Theatre*, \$25-\$100.

LEGALLY BLONDE: THE MUSICAL

February 2-14

The mainstream movie turned musical follows Elle Woods, a sorority sister who sets her sights on Harvard Law, determined to prove to her ex-boyfriend she's got the wherewithal to excel at more than just shopping for the latest fashions. *Buell Theatre*, ticket prices TBA.

MARY POPPINS

March 4-April 4

Disney's take on the infamous, magical nanny hits the stage as a musical that's proved as popular as the original children's books. *Buell Theatre*, ticket prices TBA.

For more information, visit www.denvercenter.org.

January 27-31

» **Blood Wedding** A tragedy that follows a mother's grief for her dead son and husband. Penned by Federico García Lorca, the drama includes the author's poetry and healthy doses of Spanish guitar music • *Loft Theatre*, www.colorado.edu/theatredance/theatre/productions.html

February 11-13

» **Colorado New Play Summit** The Denver Center Theatre Company's annual event draws theater pros to see two world premieres, readings of new works, a panel discussion, and a playwrights' slam • *www.denvercenter.org*

February 11-13, 17-21

» **The Country Wife** William Wycherley's 1675 farce follows the antics of Harry Horner, who aims to sleep with the women of London society • *University Theatre*, www.colorado.edu/theatredance/theatre/productions.html

February 11-March 13

» **A Song for Coretta** Staged to honor Black History Month, the play follows five women from separate backgrounds while they patiently wait to pay their respects to the late Coretta Scott King • *Shadow Theatre Company*, \$26, www.shadowtheatre.com

February 12-March 14

» **The Graduate** The novel turned Hollywood flick turned Broadway hit presents the angst-filled adventures of Benjamin Braddock and the original cougar, Mrs. Robinson • *Aurora Fox Arts Center*, \$24, www.aurorafox.org

February 19-March 14

» **Zora** The biography of writer Zora Neale Hurston, who wrote *Their Eyes Were Watching God* (1937) and was one of the leading voices of the Harlem Renaissance, comes to the stage • *Aurora Fox Arts Center*, \$24, www.aurorafox.org ▲