



UCCS Theatre Company's "Cats" leans into surrealism of original production, added dates after last week's storm

BY: ELLA BARRY / ON: MARCH 20, 2024 / IN: FEATURES

UCCS Theatre Company's upcoming student and faculty production of Andrew Lloyd Webber's "Cats" will run until March 24 and bring a unique set design to the Dusty Loo Bon Vivant Theater that leans into the surrealist aesthetic.

Director Kevin Landis has been dreaming of directing "Cats" for over 15 years, and finally began making it a reality last year. "We announced it a year ago ... and then we really started casting and the rehearsal process late last semester," Landis said.

The original Broadway musical, which ran from 1982 to 2000, follows a tribe of cats who must make a choice about life and death over the course of a single night. According to Landis, "Cats" focuses on themes of humanity, life, death and aging.

"I have an overarching frame that I wanted to put on the show ... that allows us to look at things like aging, identity, transitions in life, which I think is hugely relevant especially to the student population," Landis said.

Landis first saw "Cats" on Broadway as a kid and thought it was weird. Years later, he decided to use that weirdness while directing "Cats," and mid-century surrealism became his muse for the production.

"There's elements of this that really are focusing on that sort of unusual aspect, not that it's not real. Surrealism is about sort of dreamscapes, so the idea of a dreamy aesthetic is something that we really played with," Landis said.

"The set is extraordinary, and we were trying some new things with the Ent Center for the Arts spaces, especially the Dusty Loo [Bon Vivant Theater] that we've never tried before," he said. "You'll see the stage used in completely new ways."

While Landis and musical director Solveig Olsen put their own twist on "Cats," they kept all the original songs in the production.

"It's really some of the greatest musical theater songs ever written, and we have a group of student musicians in the orchestra playing it live, so there's nothing more visceral and wonderful than watching people dance and sing and play instruments in real time," Landis said.

"Cats" will be performed by UCCS students from the Theatre & Dance program, which puts on a main stage show each spring. Landis highly praised the students in the production.

"Working with students is my favorite way to do [it] because there's a certain amount of energy and excitement that comes with working with students developing their craft that is not replicable in any other way," Landis said.

Landis encouraged people to come see "Cats," saying, "We should be going to support the arts because there is nothing quite like experiencing something with other people live."

FOLLOW



LATEST STORIES



UCCS women's basketball post-season recap: Head coach and junior guard look back on successes and challenges



Men's basketball post-season recap: Coach Culver reflects on season's injuries and wins



Enrollment team wonders how campus crises may impact enrollment amid a continued decline



Sports Paulumn: NFL Mock Draft - Three quarterbacks selected with first three picks

He went on to detail what makes “Cats” such a special musical. “This is the first time we’ve done a show in which the director, the choreographer and the music director all have equal weight, because it’s such a dance musical,” Landis said.

“Cats” opened on March 14 in the Dusty Loo Bon Vivant Theater at the ENT Center and will run until March 24. Tickets can be purchased through the box office [online](#) or over the phone by calling 719-255-8181. Students can attend the show for free by presenting their ID number when they purchase tickets.

Cats. Graphic courtesy of the Ent Center.

Previous Post: [SPORTS SPOTLIGHT | Audrey Bloomquist on her track and field career](#)

Next Post: [Sports Paulumn: The eight most intriguing March Madness matchups](#)



Get to know performers Flak, Krew and Crimsuna for UCES's spring concert



OPINION | Meeting university administration shouldn't be a privilege for students

Scribe@uccs.edu

University Center Room 106
1420 Austin Bluffs Parkway
Colorado Springs, CO 80918

[About Us](#)

Designed using Magazine News Byte Premium. Powered by WordPress.