

Bringing to life

BY JOE COUTURE, LEADER-POST SEPTEMBER 22, 2011

Globe Theatre's main stage will be outfitted with a curling rink and the actors will have to land rocks live on cue during the upcoming production of W.O. Mitchell's *The Black Bonspiel of Wullie MacCrimmon*.

"A classic Canadian comedy by one of Saskatchewan's most beloved playwrights, *The Black Bonspiel of Wullie MacCrimmon* follows Wullie, a smalltown shoemaker and avid curler who makes a deal with the dark side to win the Macdonald Brier," explains the media release promoting the show. "He soon finds himself in a tournament against Macbeth, Judas Iscariot, Guy Fawkes and the Devil himself!"

"It's W.O. Mitchell - he's telling us, with great humour and with great love, truths about humanity and also about life on the prairies and using one of the prairies' great pastimes as a mean to tell this classic human tale," said Alan Dilworth, the director of the Globe's production. "I think it's beautiful. I think curlers and non-curlers alike will have a great time."

Directing the show has meant a crash course in curling for Dilworth, who was born and raised in Toronto, and whose professional life is based in that city. This production is the director's first time working at the Globe.

"I feel like in terms of curling, it's like I've been thrown into the ring, as it were," Dilworth said with a laugh. "I grew up playing a lot of sports, but in my neighbourhood growing up, curling wasn't a popular game, so I didn't have access to it. In the past few months, I've certainly learned more about curling than I knew before."

Last spring, Dilworth met Merv Fonger, the curling coach of Saskatchewan's Team Holland, to learn more about the sport. Fonger has also been working with the cast during rehearsals on their curling skills.

"Funny enough, very close to my house in Toronto is what's called the High Park Curling Club," Dilworth added. "It was wonderful to kind of connect with some of the curling teachers in my community as a result of the show. It made me get to know my community."

"And the learning has been going on not just before I got here, but also in the rehearsal hall," he said. "Some of (the) performers have quite a bit of experience curling. In fact, one of the actors, his father was a really successful curler."

Dilworth is leading an artistic team that includes Robin Fisher as the set and costume designer and Robert Thomson as lighting designer. The stage management team is led by Kim Bujaczek, with Stephanie Link as the assistant stage manager and Jessica McLeod as the apprentice stage manager.

Wullie is played by Globe crowd favourite Jerry Franken. Franken has performed in Globe shows including *Jake and the Kid*, *Having Hope at Home* and *The Christmas Carol*.

Lee Boyes plays Macbeth, Mark Claxton plays Guy Fawkes and Cavan Cunningham plays Malleable Charlie Brown. Cunningham will be recognizable to audiences from his extensive television career, including parts on *MacGyver*, *X-Files*, *InSecurity* and six seasons as Mayor Fitzy on *Corner Gas*.

Duncan Fisher plays Judas Iscariot, Neil Foster plays Pipe-Fitting Charlie Brown, Maggie Huculak plays Annie Brown, Christopher Hunt plays Clock Charlie Brown and Globe veteran Joey Tremblay plays O. Cloutie/Devil. Rylan Wilkie plays Reverend Pringle.

THE BLACK BONSPIEL OF WULLIE MACCRIMMON

Sept. 28 - Oct. 16 Globe Theatre Main Stage

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