STEPHEN SANTA

DIRECTOR

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PRESS

STEPHEN WAS RECENTLY NAMED ONE OF THE TOP THREE DIRECTORS IN PITTSBURGH.

"The upcoming production of Godspell is directed by none other than Pittsburgh's own born-and-bred wunderkind, Stephen Santa. This shockingly baby-faced (sincerely – the kid is 25!) maestro of the director's chair has recently been taking the city by storm with his voraciously talented, thoroughly detailed style of direction. Many of Santa's productions have seen Pittsburgh area theaters, including Little Lake, South Park, Stage 62 and The Theatre Factory. Most recently, he worked with the North American premiere of "POP!", a new musical starring Anthony Rapp, at the CITY Theatre in Pittsburgh. Stephen also made his New York City directing debut with "UNCHARTED: The Music of Anna K. Jacobs" at the Ars Nova Theatre." -**CBS Local**

The Bald Theatre Company presents A New Brain as its second-ever production, and I'm happy to report that the evening is just about as enjoyable as can be. The big news is director Stephen Santa, and how at such a hideously young age (he's only 25) he continues to impress with an extraordinarily attuned sense of theatricality." Last year I saw him give a great performance in The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee (another Finn musical). But that in no way prepared me for his work as director of last month's supersonic Stage 62 production of The Full Monty -- which, frankly, still astounds." - **City Paper**

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"An adaptation of Frances Hodgson Burnett's classic novel 'The Secret Garden' has become another crowd pleaser for the Fall Family Matinee Series at Little Lake Theatre, and like last year's 'Pinkalicious,' it was directed with imagination and flair by Stephen Santa. Nobody is more satisfied with the results than artistic director Sunny Disney Fitchett, who lauded Santa for his talent and his ability to work within budgetary limitations.

"Here's an example of the strength Steve has as a director," Fitchett told me. "His vision was to run projections throughout the play – he came to (technical director) Nathan Bell and me early on – and, unfortunately, you need a very expensive and powerful projector that is capable of throwing a great deal of light for the projections to be seen at the same time the stage lights are on.

"So, not giving up, he went away and designed the projections to be used during blackouts instead. That flexibility – without compromising vision, but understanding the parameters of what you have to work with – is a great strength."

-Observer Reporter

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"But just as the characters in Full Monty win us over with determination and sincerity, the Stage 62 company have us rooting for them from the beginning. Thanks to incredibly strong, sincere performances and fiercely talented direction, the victory they score becomes the victory inside the show itself. Director Stephen Santa's greatest accomplishment is knowing the abilities and limitations of the cast and crew, wisely emphasizing the former and finessing the latter. You'd think that would be Directing 101, but -- as I can sadly report -- that's not always the case. Santa has some trouble moving us in and out of the individual scenes, but the collective force of what he's assembled on stage is solid, professional and hugely entertaining. Stage 62 has a big hit on its hands."

- The Pittsburgh City Paper

"I find myself singing his praises so often people are gonna think I'm on his payroll, but once again Stephan Santa raises the artistic level of Stage 62 several notches with his completely on-point and ruthlessly professional direction. He's the reason this show is the knock-out success that it is."

- The Pittsburgh City Paper

"Stage 62 presents the non-academic local premiere of The Producers, featuring a huge cast and crew loaded with Pittsburgh talent and directed by theatrical wünderkind Stephen Santa.

All of it is held together, seemingly by the sheer force of personality, by director Santa who continues to impress with a theatrical ability far beyond his years."

- The Pittsburgh City Paper

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Stage 62 director Stephen Santa, at the Andrew Carnegie Free Library and Music Hall, presents the clearest, most coherent NEXT TO NORMAL I've ever seen. It's true that he's shaved off some of the rough edges, some of the confrontational "this is real life, these are real issues" attitude that made NEXT TO NORMAL perhaps the closest thing to a 21st-century RENT so far. But in place of the starkness and slightly chilly tone of the Broadway version, he shows us a real, and troubled, family searching for light in the darkness.

But in Stage 62's passionate performance, I saw for the first time the possibility that there could still be a happy ending for these broken people. In the final moments of the show, Santa brings back a near iconic image from Act 1, then subverts it, turning it from a symbol of dread into a symbol of hope. It's an apt metaphor not only for the characters in the piece, but for the way Santa has reimagined the entire show.

- BroadwayWorld

The Drowsy Chaperone: "Stage 62, under Stephen Santa's direction, presents a solid, beautifully sung new production with some knock-out moments."

- Pittsburgh City Paper

PRESS

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The Light in the Piazza

"Director, and miracle worker, Stephen Santa has assembled a cast of absolute perfection featuring performers who can melt with their talent."

- Pittsburgh City Paper

"You may not understand the words, but director Stephen Santa and his cast work to ensure the emotions, intentions and story are clear."

- Pittsburgh Tribune Review

local director Stephen Santa has a knack for bringing humanity and joy to tricky pieces of modernist musical theatre (see also his production of Next to Normal last spring), and he has again worked his magic in the Pittsburgh area. I may not particularly like The Light in the Piazza as a work on its own, but I genuinely loved the Front Porch Theatricals production, showcased in the New Hazlett Theatre.

- BroadwayWorld

PRODUCTION PHOTOS

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LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS (2011)

THE FULLY MONTY (2011)

PRODUCTION PHOTOS

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POP! (2012) STARRING ANTHONY RAPP

AVENUE Q (2013)

PRODUCTION PHOTOS

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TUESDAYS WITH MORRIE (2013)

ANGELS IN AMERICA (2014)

FLASHDANCE THE MUSICAL (2015) NATIONAL TOUR

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Next to Normal (2015)

The Light in the Piazza (2015)