



MEDIA RELEASE

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This Holiday Season, Travel Around the World in 80 Days With San Jose Rep *A production powered by Steampunk!*

SAN JOSE, CA. (November 12, 2008) — This holiday season San Jose Rep unwraps a special treat for the entire family! Arriving just in time for the holidays is Mark Brown's adaptation of Jules Verne's novel, *Around the World in 80 Days* – a clever adventuresome comedy with five actors playing more than three dozen roles! A production fueled by the imageries of Steampunk, which combines the elegance of the Victorian era with futuristic technology. This high-spirited, fast-moving and highly imaginative production is directed by Center Rep's Artistic Director, **Michael Butler**. Co-produced with Laguna Playhouse — the race around the world begins November 22nd and continues until December 21st, 2008 at San Jose Repertory Theatre, 101 Paseo de San Antonio in downtown San Jose. Preview performances are November 22, 23, and 26. **Press Opening is Friday, November 28 at 8:00 p.m.**

Tickets are available at the San Jose Rep Box Office at 101 Paseo de San Antonio or can be purchased online at www.SJRep.com or by calling (408) 367-7255.

It's England 1872 and Phileas Fogg (Matthew Floyd Miller) is the most exact of men. He conducts his days on a most precise of schedules and spends his evenings at the local Reform Club. A well traveled gentleman of substantial means, Fogg agrees to an outrageous wager that puts his fortune at risk. With his loyal French manservant, Passepartout (Gendell Hernandez), by his side, Fogg sets off to circumnavigate the globe in a mere 80 days. Along the way, he encounters an ever-increasing entourage of hilarious characters. To complicate matters, the bumbling, inept lawman, Detective Fix (Howard Swain), has mistaken Fogg for a notorious bank robber and tenaciously shadows Fogg's movements around the globe. The tension builds as danger, romance and surprises abound in this whirlwind adventure across seven continents. Will Fogg make it back in time to win the wager or will he discover that there are more important things in life than showing up on time?

"Given the state of much in our world today, it's a delight to revisit this 'simpler' time, and to see the world through the eyes of Verne – a true visionary of his time," comments Rep Artistic Director Rick Lombardo. "The themes of honor, friendship and trust are perfect for the times in which we find ourselves."

"Doing this play is like running a steeplechase designed by clowns," remarks Director Michael Butler. "You're constantly inventing how to do it, how to get over the next obstacle and run the race — it's a blast! A lot of the inspiration for the physical production came from the whole Steampunk movement, which was directly influenced by Jules Verne."

Inspired by the Steampunk movement, this production of *Around the World in 80 Days* fuses Victorian beauty with modern day technology. This primarily aesthetic movement emerged as a subculture in 1980 and has

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grown in scope and notoriety throughout the years. Butler continues, “Steampunk is a subgenre of fantasy and speculative fiction that combines the mechanics of the industrial age past with the real technology of today to describe a fantastic alternate universe in which steam power is still used. It’s a kind of Retro-Futurism.”

A renaissance man, Michael Butler is a director, writer, actor, and composer. A graduate of The Juilliard School, he has worked on Broadway, in television and in film. At San Jose Rep, audiences remember him fondly in productions such as *Wintertime*, ‘ART,’ and *Communicating Doors*. He has also directed numerous productions for the Rep, including *Nixon’s Nixon*, *The Haunting of Winchester*, *Side Man*, *Desire Under the Elms*, and *Twelfth Night*.

The cast of ***Around the World in 80 Days*** features returning favorites **Anna Bullard** (James Forster, John Sullivan, Priest, Aouda) who was last seen at the Rep in *The Foreigner* and the world premiere of *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*; **Mark Farrell** (Gauthier Ralph, British Consul, Director of Police, Priest, Sir Francis, Judge Obadiah, Chinese Broker, Ship Clerk, Bunsby, Proctor, Engineer, Mudge, Clerk, Speedy, Ships Engineer, Train Clerk) was last seen at the Rep in *The Haunting of Winchester*; **Gendell Hernández** (Passepartout) last appeared at the Rep in *Sons of Don Juan*; **Matthew Floyd Miller** (Phileas Fogg) appeared in the Rep’s production of *Desire Under the Elms* and **Howard Swain** (Andrew Stuart, Detective Fix, Priest, Conductor, Elephant Owner, Young Parsi, OysterPuff, Reverend Wilson’s Servant) has appeared in numerous productions at San Jose Rep, including *A Christmas Story*, *A Flea in Her Ear*, *The Odd Couple*, *The Matchmaker*, and *Sideman*.

The creative team includes **Kelly Tighe** (Set Designer); **Todd Roehrman** (Costume Designer); **Kurt Landisman** (Lighting Designer) and **Jeff Mockus** (Sound Design). The stage manager is **Laxmi Kumaran**.

Around the World in 80 Days is co-sponsored by **Ballys Total Fitness**, **Lockheed Martin** and supported, in part, by a **Cultural Affairs grant from the City of San Jose**.

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About the Rep

San Jose Rep is the premier non-profit, professional theatre company in the South Bay, presenting six main stage productions each year. As a major contributor to South Bay’s cultural community for 28 years, the Rep’s mission is to engage, entertain and inspire people. The Rep produces innovative theatrical performances that offer fresh perspectives into the human condition, educational programs that promote life-long learning, and outreach initiatives that benefit our diverse community. For more information, visit www.SJRep.com