



ROY BLAKEY

Carl Schoenborn, who "researched" Jerry Springer by avidly watching his performances, thinks the lurid talk-show host is really a pretty good guy.

Jerry Springer

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sexual Ku Klux Klansmen and guys who've married their horse.

The hard-edged, profanity-laced, intentionally offensive musical doesn't explain that — um — evolution. But it does glory in the syndicated television show's excesses — and even does them one better. Without divulging too much of the plot, suffice it to say that the second act features a fever-dreaming Jerry trying to mediate a dispute between Jesus Christ and Satan, with a host of heavenly and not-so-heavenly creations looking on.

It's all done with tongue planted firmly in cheek, says Steven Meerdink, artistic director of Minneapolis Musical Theatre.

"It's a show about real people — bizarre as they might be — trying to find their 15 minutes of

fame and what they'll do to get it," he said.

But the combination of religious icons, bad language and one of TV's most notorious personalities has given the show a colorful, and not uncomplicated, history.

First staged at the Fringe Festival in Edinburgh, Scotland, the show opened at the National Theatre in London in 2003, where it was a smash success, garnering the Olivier — the British equivalent of the Tony Award — as the year's best musical. But when the British Broadcasting Corporation aired the show in 2005, it generated some 60,000 complaints. A touring version drew protests from Christian groups, who decried the show's "filth and blasphemy."

The controversy soured initial plans to bring the show to Broadway in 2005, although a concert version will be staged at Carnegie Hall — of all places — in January. The first fully staged American version took place in

Chicago in May, followed by an August production in Memphis, Tenn.

Hopes for a Broadway production are said to still be simmering, but meanwhile, smaller productions are beginning to pop up across the country to build buzz for the show. The Minneapolis Musical Theatre's version will be the third full production in the United States, and other stagings are in the offing in such places as Washington, D.C., and Des Moines, Iowa.

Meerdink said the show fits squarely into his company's wheelhouse of producing new or infrequently staged musicals. MMT's past seasons have included such offbeat titles as "Bat Boy," "Zombie Prom" and "When Pigs Fly."

While those shows were quirky and offbeat, their construction and delivery was conventional and relatively polite and generally did not require the kinds of disclaimers MMT is putting on all its advertising for "Jerry Springer" ("Intended for

mature audiences! Contains very strong language and strong sexual references.")

"This show goes all the way to the edge," Meerdink said. "When you watch 'Jerry Springer' on TV, they bleed all bad words out. Now, imagine if those words weren't bleeped out, and they were sung."

Schoenborn doesn't have to imagine it. He has been living it during rehearsals, and starting tonight, he'll be at the center of it all.

He says all of his research on Springer — he has been watching him on "America's Got Talent," too — has given him a soft spot for the real-life character he portrays. According to Schoenborn, he seems to be a pretty good guy.

"I think he's too smart for this," he said, "but if Jerry ever ran for office again, I'd have to think about voting for him."

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Ross Raihala

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think that, by now, anyone even vaguely interested in sampling Dylan's work would have ample opportunities to do so.

Anyway, the three-CD "Dylan" does a fine job of cherry-picking his strongest work, which means the first disc covers those five magical years from 1962 to 1967, while the latter two survey the sometimes spotty three decades that followed. While fans will surely squabble over some of the choices, what really works best about the collection is its smart selections drawn from Dylan's lean years in the '80s and early '90s, as well as the generous helping of songs from his recent trio of comeback masterpieces ("Time Out of Mind," "Love and Theft," "Modern Times").

Alas, the newly commissioned, and quite excellent, Mark Ronson remix of the "Blonde on Blonde" song "Most Likely You'll Go Your Way (And I'll Go Mine)" didn't make the cut, but it's available as an online single. And in a cool bit of Web-based promo, the label set up DylanMessaging.com, a nifty site that allows folks to send a personalized e-mail message that shows up on the cards Dylan holds in a clip from his famous "Subterranean Home-sick Blues" video.

If that's not enough, the next major Dylan release is only a few weeks away. "The Other Side of the Mirror: Bob Dylan Live at the Newport Folk Festival, 1963-1965" is a DVD that offers just what its title suggests, live footage drawn from three years of Dylan's performances, including his legendary electric performance from '65. The label claims 70 percent of the footage on the DVD has never been officially released until now. It arrives in stores Oct. 30 and is set to air on PBS at some point after Thanksgiving.

IN THE CLUBS

Both First Avenue and the Entry are going to be busy

places this week, and it all starts tonight. Pop psychedelic band **Of Montreal** — who've had such a banner year, the group's publicist just sent out a custom thank-you card to journalists — headlines an early all-ages show with support from **Grand Buffet** and promising newcomers **MGMT** (a dreamy Brooklyn band whose sound should mesh nicely with the headliners). Tonight's late show, meanwhile, features mash-up master **Girl Talk**, the inexplicably popular hipster **Dan Deacon** and, oh yes, Minneapolis' own **Tay Zonday**, i.e. the "Chocolate Rain" guy from MySpace. Meanwhile, '90s indie-poppers **Imperial Teen** (who are like the Rentals except they're good) play the Entry with **So It Goes** and the **Parlour Suite**.

That's just the beginning. The main room's schedule includes lingering punkers **Bad Religion** (Saturday), Detroit goofballs **Electric Six** (Sunday), stiff-haired metalheads **Static-X** (Tuesday) and two nights of **Spoon** (Wednesday and Thursday). The Entry is all about the buzz bands: Krautrock revivalists **Fujiya and Miyagi** (Saturday), trippy Canucks the **Besnard Lakes** (Sunday), indie-rock producer/artist **John Vander-slice** and prolific New Yorkers **Bishop Allen** (Monday), new Saddle Creek signees **Tokyo Police Club** (Tuesday) and Silversun Pickups pals **Sea Wolf** (Thursday).

On the other end of the spectrum, the Myth in Maplewood kicks off a new weekly **country night** tonight that promises — at least according to the poster — to be sexier and drunker than you might expect. In addition to

all sorts of drink specials, there will be cash and prizes awarded each week.

Folks who saw **Bob Mould's** 2005 full-band tour — his first such outing since 1998 — are in luck. He has just released the live DVD "Circle of Friends," which captures that tour's stop in his adopted hometown of Washington, D.C., a night he recently called "one of the best shows I have played in years." The DVD hits stores Tuesday, and Wednesday, Mould will host a screening of it at Bryant-Lake Bowl followed by a solo performance and Q&A session.

Finally, one of the coolest events of the year is taking place Saturday. The third annual **Zombie Pub Crawl** starts at 3 p.m. in Gold Medal Park and then stumbles into Grumpy's, the first of six stops that concludes with a possibly secret performance by Dance Band at the Nomad World Pub. Simply dress like the undead and let out a moan at each bar to get the drink special of the hour. For the full itinerary, makeup tips and a coupon for Twin Cities Magic and Costume (now in its new location a block from Mears Park), see ZombiePubCrawl.com. And even if you aren't planning to join the fun, the Web site may change your mind with its highly entertaining videos from previous crawls and some inspirational messages from Zombie Abe Lincoln.

Pop Music Critic Ross Raihala can be reached at rraihala@pioneerpress.com or 651-228-5553. Read more about the local music scene on his blog, "The Ross Who Knew Too Much," at blogs.twincities.com/ross.



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	<p>WURTELE THRUST STAGE</p> <p><i>Global Voice</i> Ian McKellen</p> <p>moderated by Joe Dowling MONDAY, OCTOBER 8, 2007 at 7 P.M.</p> 	<p>WURTELE THRUST STAGE</p> <p>The Guthrie presents the Royal Shakespeare Company's productions of King Lear SOLD OUT</p> <p>by William Shakespeare directed by Trevor Nunn</p> <p>The Seagull LIMITED</p> <p>by Anton Chekhov directed by Trevor Nunn</p> <p>In Repertory NOW - OCTOBER 14, 2007</p>	<p>DOWLING STUDIO</p> <p>The Guthrie presents the Frank Theatre production of THE PILLOWMAN</p> <p>by Martin McDonagh directed by Wendy Knox NOW - OCTOBER 14, 2007</p> 

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