



Powered by Clickability

Click to Print

[SAVE THIS](#) | [EMAIL THIS](#) | [Close](#)



Photo by: Cheryl Games

It's A Stevie Wonderful Life PICK

[Similar Stories](#) | [Topics](#)

STORIES

[As U2 Like It](#)

[OthE.L.O.](#)

[Alice in One-Hit-Wonderland](#)

[Jackson Frost](#)

[Much Adoobie Brothers About Nothing](#)

TOPICS

[Entertainment](#) | [Performing Arts](#) | [Theater](#)

December 18, 2008

By Jeff Favre

In 13 years Troubadour Theater Company has created a sizable canon of shows fusing pop music with classic tales. So it's easy to forgive -- or even thank -- the wacky group for repeating one of its more celebrated holiday shows. And because the Troubies never write anything in stone, this rendition of the [Frank Capra](#) 1946 movie coupled with [Stevie Wonder](#) songs has plenty of new jokes: Among others, Sarah Palin and American automakers take hits. Director and star [Matt Walker](#) sets a hilarious tone, and the rest of the cast is equally funny and musically capable of covering -- or satirizing -- some of Wonder's wonderful hits.

The classic movie plot of a man who wonders what life would be like without him is retained. But Capra never could have imagined [Jimmy Stewart](#)'s character, George (Walker), in an ever-growing Afro; or that the guardian angel, Clarence (Rick Batalla), would be a Latino hipster. Some of the songs are performed with lyrics close to the original; others are altered wildly to further the plot. "Part-Time Lover" becomes the anthem for flirty Violet (Jen Seifert), and the Wonder-Paul McCartney duet is altered to "Ivory and Ivory." The production's comical highlight, for which Walker's direction deserves particular praise, is a complex chase through the entire theatre, captured live on video cameras.

Walker's impression of Stewart earns easy laughs, as does Morgan Rusler's accurate portrayal of evil Mr. Potter (played in the film by Lionel Barrymore). The vocal stars are Erin Matthews as Mary and Lisa Valenzuela as Ma.

The Troubies fine-tune shows during the run, eliminating some jokes -- it may be too soon for turning a Wal-Mart trampling into a punch line. But as is, you're unlikely to find a better holiday show. The company remains the city's standard-bearer for musical satire.

Presented by the Troubadour Theatre Company

at the Falcon Theatre, 4252 Riverside Dr., Burbank.

Dec. 12, 2008-Jan. 4, 2009. Wed.-Fri., 8 p.m.; Sat., 4 and 8 p.m.; Sun., 7 p.m.

(818) 955-8101 or [Falcon Theatre](#)

Links referenced within this article

[\\$link.linkNames](#)

[\\$link.linkDisplayUrls](#)

[As U2 Like It](#)

http://www.backstage.com/bso/news_reviews/other_news/article_display.jsp?vnu_content_id=1003844273&inp=true

[OthE.L.O.](#)

http://www.backstage.com/bso/news_reviews/other_news/article_display.jsp?vnu_content_id=1003623192&inp=true

[Alice in One-Hit-Wonderland](#)

http://www.backstage.com/bso/news_reviews/other_news/article_display.jsp?vnu_content_id=1003617025&inp=true

[Jackson Frost](#)

http://www.backstage.com/bso/news_reviews/other_news/article_display.jsp?vnu_content_id=1003521548&inp=true

[Much Adoobie Brothers About Nothing](#)

http://www.backstage.com/bso/news_reviews/other_news/article_display.jsp?vnu_content_id=1003019197&inp=true

[Entertainment](#)

<http://www.backstage.com/bso/topics/Entertainment>

[Performing Arts](#)

<http://www.backstage.com/bso/topics/Performing Arts>

[Theater](#)

<http://www.backstage.com/bso/topics/Theater>

[Frank Capra](#)

<http://www.backstage.com/bso/about/Frank+Capra>

[Stevie Wonder](#)

<http://www.backstage.com/bso/about/Stevie+Wonder>

[Matt Walker](#)

<http://www.backstage.com/bso/about/Matt+Walker>

[Jimmy Stewart](#)

<http://www.backstage.com/bso/about/Jimmy+Stewart>

[Falcon Theatre](#)

<http://www.falcontheatre.com>

Find this article at:

http://www.backstage.com/bso/news_reviews/other_news/article_display.jsp?vnu_content_id=1003923948

 [Click to Print](#)

[SAVE THIS](#) | [EMAIL THIS](#) | [Close](#)

Uncheck the box to remove the list of links referenced in the article.

© 2008 Nielsen Business Media, Inc. All rights reserved.