



Electronic Press Kit
Touring Production

2018-03-01

Pull Quotes:

SHORT QUOTES (for ads, etc.)

"MAGICAL! A frisky adaptation of the Jules Verne sci-fi saga... The use of projections is sometimes jaw dropping!" (NY Times)

"Dazzling, hypnotic, immersive, and very very clever"

"It's a delightful experience. And one very familiar to Florida thrill-seekers... It's a ride, and an excellent one at that."
(Sarasota Observer)

"Astonishing... stunning... miraculous"
(Sarasota Herald)

"WONDERFUL! Bringing Verne's classic to life in such an exciting way, coupled with a strong eco-message. The action is augmented by interactive tech, which ensures the audience an entertaining and thoughtful experience." (Huffington Post)

"An astonishing, you-are-there version of the Jules Verne classic tale... The adventure of a lifetime" (New York Off-Broadway Buzz)

"MAGICAL! A visually stunning adventure story, perfect for children and adults alike." (TheaterScene NY)

"STUNNING!... Francis and Miller are to be commended for challenging young audiences by staying true to Verne's larger vision... This trip on the Nautilus is worth the plunge."
(theatermania.com, NY)

"BEAUTIFUL!... Verne's classic tale comes to life in the hands of director Rick Miller" (Berkshire Fine Arts)

"A MUST-SEE! I should add inspiring, creative, mysterious, thought-provoking, and lots of fun for all!" (beyourbestmom.com)

"A great theatrical experience! One of the most visually engaging and creatively dynamic presentations to grace the stage in ages!" (The Beat Magazine, London ON)

"An elaborate living cartoon... with four performers who shepherd the play's messages to the back row of the theatre with intensity and performing skill." (Scene Changes, London ON)

"Theatrical magic! An extraordinary experience! The special effects are so compelling and engaging, you can't take your eyes off the stage!" (La Jornada, London ON)

"With a cast of four, and spectacular stage craft, it's Miller's most ambitious work yet, truly bringing together technology and storytelling!" (Stratford Festival Reviews, London ON)

"OUTSTANDING! Rick Miller and Craig Francis' adaptation of Jules Verne's 20,000 Leagues from Under the Sea is an entertaining two acts of multimedia magic! If you want an adventure on the high seas with all the high tech trimmings, then take the family to Miller's version of the Jules Verne Classic." (Scene Changes, Toronto)

"Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea takes audiences to a trippy underwater wonderland! The special effects are so compelling you can't take your eyes off the stage." (Toronto Star)

"STUNNING! Some of the most adept and innovative stagecraft I have ever seen! A sumptuous experience for the senses!" (Mooney on Theatre, Toronto)

"A technological marvel!... A fine visual show whose effects are, need I say, of oceanic proportions." (National Post)

"Co-creators Rick Miller and Craig Francis are both comedic and conceptual geniuses and Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea is an experience as much as it is theatre."
(Drew Rowsome theatre blog, Toronto)

"Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea is extraordinary... a fantastical fusion of low-tech puppetry and high-tech projections!" (Drew Rowsome theatre blog, Toronto)

Pull Quotes:

FULLER QUOTES (for press releases, etc.)

"Theatergoers, there's no need to pack scuba gear or even a snorkel mask to plunge into the ocean deep. In Craig Francis and Rick Miller's *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea*, a frisky adaptation of the Jules Verne sci-fi saga at the New Victory Theater, a few actors, a few more props and some extremely nifty projections send the audience right to the seafloor. Hey, look out for that squid!... The acting is never less than zesty and the use of projections, courtesy of Deco Dawson, is sometimes jaw dropping. While the show's creators haven't made the environmental themes too stark or scolding, children and their grown-ups may think twice before buying and tossing another plastic water bottle. Even those deadly squids deserve an unpolluted ocean."
(New York Times review)

"A visually stunning adaptation of Jules Verne's novel comes to the New Victory Theater. *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea*, now running at the New Victory Theater in a spectacularly designed stage adaptation created by Craig Francis and Rick Miller, doesn't shy away from including some of the novel's larger themes. With an astonishing array of gorgeous projections designed by Deco Dawson, Miller, who also directs, gives this story a modern twist by touching on the problem of oceanic pollution and its harmful effects on the planet... Eye-popping underwater images, a spectacular representation of an undulating sea, and perception-altering effects (watch for the cleverly staged dinner-table episodes) will get kids oohing and aahing... Francis and Miller are to be commended for challenging young audiences by staying true to Verne's larger vision... This trip on the Nautilus is worth the plunge." (theatermania.com, NY)

"This was all so unexpected! The trailer doesn't do the theatrical effects justice. Let me start there. The visuals are amazing and keeps your eyes glued to the stage. You truly feel as if you are either in the water or on board the Nautilus. We loved the modern tie in of using a phone to film in the show. I felt that it helped engage the younger audience members by combining the new technology with the story. Now my boys not only wanted to read the book itself, but use some of the techniques they witnessed for their own filming. This is what theater is about! Theater is like the show itself, it's about adapting and being in a constant state of motion and evolving! Four of us saw the show and we each took away a different message and we discussed our thoughts this morning in great detail. Now, that's a theater experience I love!" (beyourbestmom.com, NY)

"Kidoons and WYRD Productions' presentation of *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under The Sea* is not a faithful re-enactment of the Jules Verne classic tale. What it is, however, is a multimedia and multi-sensory re-imagining of the novel, which includes contemporary elements, that proves to be one of the most visually engaging and creatively dynamic presentations to grace the stage in ages." (The Beat Magazine, London ON)

"The four primary characters are strong, particularly Shaver in the role of Jules (who also serves as the narrator). What the play does extraordinary well is transform the environment in which it's produced, using lighting, sound, technology, and visual effects to the fullest to create a world into which the viewer is immersed... As a multimedia and multi-sensory experience, *Twenty Thousand Leagues* is wonderful. The visuals and action on stage should captivate younger viewers, whilst those of us a little longer in the tooth can appreciate the combination of the production and the acting as an expansion of what theatre traditionally has been on the Grand's stage." (The Beat Magazine, London ON)

"STUNNING! Some of the most adept and innovative stagecraft I have ever seen! The Nautilus and the underwater world are magically created by some of the most adept and innovative stagecraft I have ever seen. Projections, scrims, fly systems, puppets, and a unique layout of risers combine with lighting and sound to make *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under The Sea* a sumptuous experience for the senses."
(Mooney on Theatre, Toronto)

"'Is that real water?' gasps the little girl behind me. And it does indeed appear that the stage is awash with roiling waves, the actors perched on the bow of a ship. Though there is no attempt to pretend that this is anything but artifice, it is theatrical magic. And only one of many collective gasps of sheer delight to come... *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* is extraordinary... a fantastical fusion of low-tech puppetry and high-tech projections! PANAMANIA is off to a gold medal start... Don't let this ship sail without climbing aboard." (Drew Rowsome theatre blog, Toronto)

"The machinery of joy is state-of-the-art... The play floods your eyes and ears with data. Your brain knows the sensory deluge is an illusion, but your imagination makes the connection anyway. It's a delightful experience. And one very familiar to Florida thrill-seekers. Of course; the play's not post-modern. It's a ride, and an excellent one at that." (Sarasota Observer)

Sarasota Observer

2017-06-17

By MARTY FUGATE

Review: Multimedia, multisensory adaptation of Jules Verne's classic immerses audiences in an oceanic experience.

Rick Miller and Craig Francis' "Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea" is making a big splash at the Asolo Rep. This adaptation of Jules Verne's novel is a whole lot of fun. That's by design — and a high-tech design it is. The machinery of joy is state-of-the-art.

Francis and Miller brings the oceanic feeling to life with a cunning mix of puppets, projections and action figures. While their production company is called Kiddoons, what they've created is hardly a kiddie show.

They play tricks with your mind. They jolt your perceptions with abrupt shifts in perspective, scale and orientation — like the scene that tricks you into thinking you're looking down at four characters sitting around a dining table. Stuff cranks down from pulleys! Stuff pops out of the stage! A radio-controlled inflatable sharks drifts through the auditorium; then a puppeteer strides by with a dagger-jawed angler fish!

Up on stage, a balcony folds and becomes the bow of the Nautilus cutting through the waves. Multiple overlapping projections dazzle you with crashing waves, a calving iceberg, a ballet of bioluminescent jellyfish, an animated world map, the aftermath of a naval battle and, yes, of course, that giant squid they keep talking about.

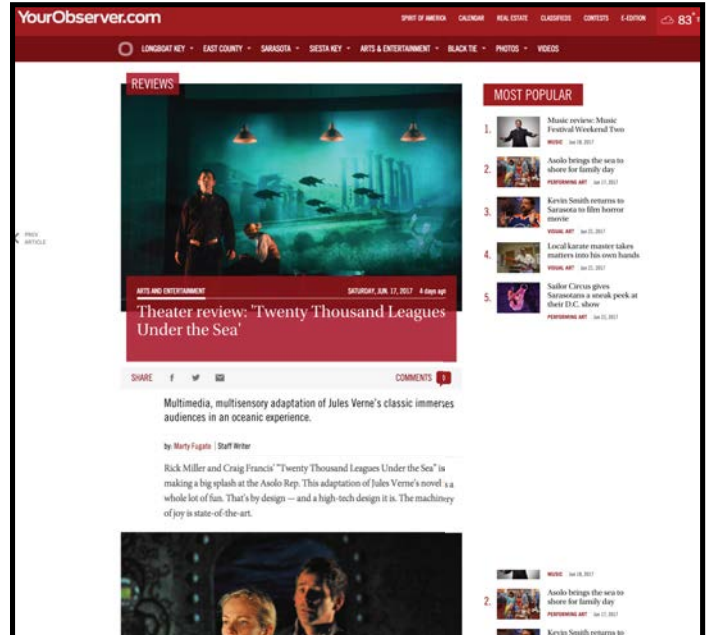
Kudos to a top-flight team of theatrical designers. Deco Dawson's projections, Marcus Jamin and Shawn Kettner's puppetry, Richard Feren's sound and Itai Erdal's lighting make the multisensory, multimedia magic happen. Their steampunk spectacle is dazzling, hypnotic, immersive and very, very clever.

Thanks to all that technological overkill, the experience unfolds with only four actors. Serafin Falcón, Brendan McMahon, Suzy Jane Hunt and Marcel Jeannin deliver solid performances under co-creator Rick Miller's full-tilt-boogie direction.

Oh. And I almost forgot — somewhere in the flash and filigree, there's also a story.

The show wraps Verne's 19th-century tale in a 21st-century frame story. Jules (McMahon), is a bored contemporary research student, mired in the Sargasso Sea of his depressing doctoral thesis on the inevitable collapse of oceanic ecosystems. But with the aid of a few action figures and a powerful imagination, he escapes! Jules inserts himself in Verne's undersea odyssey as both a character and the narrator. He promptly sets a course for a happy ending.

Aside from the anachronistic addition of Jules, the loss of a few minor characters and a sex-change for Professor Arronax (Hunt), the broad outlines of Verne's tale stay the same.



<http://www.yourobserver.com/article/theater-review-'twenty-thousand-leagues-under-the-sea'>

A misanthropic genius who calls himself "Captain Nemo" (Falcón) invents a self-sustaining, deep-water submarine about a century ahead of schedule. After withdrawing from civilization for good, he spends his time investigating the oceans and battling the forces of imperialism and ecological devastation. After a sea skirmish, Nemo picks up three castaways and informs them that they're on the Nautilus for good. When Ned (Jeannin), the illiterate, macho harpooner, sends an SOS to the world, the navies of the world close in. There's a big battle. Nemo rams several ships. After that ...

I'm not sure what happens next, and I'm not sure it matters.

The production is experiential. Narrative is secondary to artifice. The play enfolds you in a clever illusion that never tries to convince you it's anything else.

There's a word for that.

I was tempted to call this, "Voyage to the Bottom of the Post-Modern Sea." But that sounds deadly dull. And "post-modern" is the wrong word. So what's the right one?

Let's think ...

The play floods your eyes and ears with data. Your brain knows the sensory deluge is an illusion, but your imagination makes the connection anyway. (Waves, squid, submarine, whatever.) It's a delightful experience. And one very familiar to Florida thrill-seekers.

Of course; the play's not post-modern. It's a ride, and an excellent one at that.

While supplying plenty of twists and turns, the creators also encourage tech-savvy theatergoers to enhance their experience with a cell-phone app. The more committed can join a band of "New Atlanteans" on a quest to save Earth's undersea life.

Sadly, the impending collapse of our oceanic ecosystems is no longer merely science fiction.

Broadway World Sarasota

2017-06-11

By CAROLAN TRBOVICH

BWW Review: TWENTY THOUSAND LEAGUES UNDER THE SEA at Asolo Repertory Theatre

The staged version of TWENTY THOUSAND LEAGUES UNDER THE SEA is a playful theatrical adaptation of Jules Verne's 1954 classic movie by the same title. Jules Verne is regarded as a visionary, a prophetic writer who was in tune not only with his world but also with the world of the future. Our world today. For those of you who remember the undersea sci-fi adventures of Captain Nemo, you may come to the theater wondering, how are they going to pull this off without resembling a humble school production.

This fresh new perspective of re-imagining classic works in which the theater is producing more and more, i.e. FINDING NEVERLAND vs. PETER PAN, WICKED vs. THE WIZARD OF OZ, offers some new perspectives for the cast, crew and theatre-goers alike. So set the movie you remember to rest onshore for now and put on your diving gear. Take the plunge. This is going to be a creatively, interesting voyage.

Produced by Jeff Lord, creators Craig Francis and Rick Miller and Canada's Kidoons and WYRD Productions, bring this version up-to-date not only via theatrics, (light design, puppetry, and projections), but by modernizing Jules' character into our world of technology, eco-concerns, and social media. It sounds weird. But it works.

In this imaginative adaptation we meet present-day Jules, enthusiastically played by Brendan McMahon. We are absorbed into his story that comes to life as he plays out his days as a graduate student stuck in a "maelstrom of cynicism and isolation about the state of the oceans today". Jules, finding it difficult to complete his essay on "Downward Spiral: Inevitable Collapse of Ocean Ecosystems", creates a mini-theater in which he acts out his journey. Being a savvy guy, he incorporates present day technology to enhance his presentation. Jules imparts the role of his hero to his instructor, Professor Aronnax (Suzy Jane Hunt). A gruff harpoon master, Ned Land, (Marcel Jeannin) and Captain Nemo (Serafin Falcom) join the adventure. Like Nemo, Jules is distraught about the rupture of our eco-system topside and escapes to an underwater utopia he creates for himself.

There are moments of very clever staging that surround the audience with the feeling of being submerged and often isolated from the rest of humanity. The waves lapping against the boat are so real you will be looking for watermarks on the stage. As Jules walks us through the journey of being tossed overboard with his friends, scrimms provide a place for lighting to reflect prison bars and movement is given to the actors as they rise and fall with the ocean waves that surround them. When they suddenly find their footing on Nemo's Nautilus and open the breech door to climb down, the door lifts above them, giving the feel of their descent into the vessel. The hollow sounds of the sub and the various rooms Nemo takes them to visit draw you in to their world. Actors juxtaposing positions and props lend a unique breadth and depth to several scenes. Of course not everyone gets along, as there always has to be some sort of



<http://www.broadwayworld.com/sarasota/article/BWW-Review-TWENTY-THOUSAND-LEAGUES-UNDER-THE-SEA-at-Asolo-Repertory-Theatre-20170611>

discord. How that all plays out, you will have to see for yourself. And you should.

Mr. McMahon is charming and accomplished as Jules and has his hands full, not just with lines and blocking, but with various voices, puppets and squids. Suzy Jane Hunt as Professor Aronnax is delightfully adventurous yet pragmatic. Serafin Falcom portrays the mysterious anti-hero Nemo with defiant lunacy. Marcel Jeannin as Ned Land does a fine job giving his character that smoking gun, waiting to erupt, edge.

Kudos to Scenic, Prop and Costume Design by Yannik Larivee, Lighting Design by Itai Erdal, Projection Design by Deco Dawson, Puppet Design by Shawn Kettner & Marcus Jamin, and Multi Media Project Manager Irina Litvinenko. So much can go wrong onstage using the various mediums incorporated in this production. You were all up to the task at hand.

So much can also go wrong with our eco-system. This statement from the show is worth contemplating, "We bought the plastic, we discarded it and it made its way into the sea. The plastic never fully decomposes, but is broken Down into smaller toxic particles, spiraling into an ever-growing reflection of our civilization: you can't see the poison, but it's everywhere".

Spoiler alert! There are flying fish that come out to swim above the audience!

Herald-Tribune

2017-06-10

By CARRIE SEIDMAN

THEATER REVIEW: Asolo's '20,000' presents an old adventure in a new light

When the show begins at 7 p.m., you're asked to leave your cell phone on and the play starts with an actor taking a selfie with the audience, you know from the get-go that "Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea" is not going to be typical Sarasota theater fare. The last of the Asolo Repertory Theatre's 2016-2017 season lineup may be based on the classic science fiction novel by French writer Jules Verne that was published in 1870, but its delivery and message are entirely 2017.

This multi-media stage adaptation by Rick Miller and Craig Francis (Miller also directs) updates Verne's venerable adventure story about a crazed captain aboard a giant submarine. It keeps some of the novel's important themes while adding a modern twist by touching on serious issues like the dangers of ocean pollution and human disconnection. But there's nothing heavy-handed in the telling, with an astonishing array of video projections and special effects and a steady stream of rock 'em, sock 'em action that makes it all feel like a graphic novel come to life.

Modern-day doctoral student Jules (Brendan McMahon), who studies ocean pollution and loves Verne's novel, is in his seventh agonizing year of trying to complete his dissertation, "Downward Spiral: Inevitable Collapse of Ocean Ecosystems." For diversion, he turns to playing with action figures on a child-size puppet stage – the scene, including his magnified hands, is projected on a large screen behind him – and imagining traveling back in time to investigate an enormous aquatic creature with his academic advisor (Suzy Jane Hunt) as his distaff counterpart, Professor Aronnax.

After meeting up with an illiterate Canadian harpoonist, Ned Land (Marcel Jeannin), the trio is kidnapped by Captain Nemo (Serafin Falcon), who has created an isolated "utopia" inside his magnificent submarine, the Nautilus. All kinds of mishaps, adventures and arguments about freedom, dictatorship and isolation ensue until Jules and his friends escape, leaving behind a message about the need for care of the ocean's fragile ecosystems and the equally important need for human communication and collaboration.

But it's not the story itself that makes this production so winning, it's how it is told, with a miraculous array of stunning projections by Deco Dawson, floating oceanic puppets by Shawn Kettner and Marcus Jamin, spooky lighting by Itai Erdal and an ear-shattering but effective sound design by Richard Feren. When they say multi-media, they really mean it. We jump back and forth, from Jules' small scale action figure battles to huge and stunningly beautiful depictions of the undulating sea and gravity-less underwater scenes, magically created by the use of scrims and projections and lighting.

Moreover, in an instant – say, when the actors jump at the same moment – the perspective can change from a side angle to an overhead (the dinner table scene is miraculous), or from a tiny

The screenshot shows the top of the Herald-Tribune website with navigation links like NEWS, PHOTOS, TICKETS, SPORTS, and ARTS. Below the masthead, there are several news snippets. The main article is titled "THEATER REVIEW: Asolo's '20,000' presents an old adventure in a new light" by Carrie Seidman, dated June 10, 2017. The article text is partially visible, starting with "When the show begins at 7 p.m., you're asked to leave your cell phone on...". To the right of the article is a large image of the stage production, showing actors on a stage with a large screen behind them displaying underwater scenes. Below the image is a caption: "Craig Francis and Rick Miller's updating of the Jules Verne classic, 'Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea' incorporates a myriad of projections, special effects and puppets at the Asolo Repertory Theatre. / Photo by Gary H. Swainman". There is also a "MOST POPULAR" list on the left side of the article, with items like "Sarasota bookstore gives everything away in final days" and "Retailers look south toward West Villages".

<http://www.heraldtribune.com/news/20170610/theater-review-asolos-20000-presents-old-adventure-in-new-light>

boat on a tempestuous sea to the enormous tentacles of a giant squid. And watch out for that all too realistic floating angle fish that may come within inches of your head if you're near an aisle.

In trying to incorporate all these special effects as well as a meaningful message, the story itself inevitably becomes a little convoluted and muddled. And while the actors are all convincing, there is little nuance in their cartoonish characterizations and an awful lot of volume in their sometimes unintelligible shouted lines. But there are certainly no dull moments in this hour and 45 minute production; sensory overload is probably a more real possibility.

You can even stay stimulated even during the 15-minute intermission by downloading an app (20,000, Kidoons Inc.) to your phone before arriving – thus the "leave your phone on" (muted) message at the start. It allows viewers to watch additional video, enter special codes, add Instagram-style selfies and, in the end, personally pledge a commitment to respecting and preserving our oceans and planet. Judging by the meager show of hands at the start, Sarasota has a way to go toward embracing this theatrical cell phone experience, but my (adult) son and I joined in and we thought it was grand.

Throughout the show's run – through July 1 – the Asolo has scheduled a variety of related activities in conjunction with local aquatic and educational organizations, from Mote Marine and the South Florida Museum, to the Sarasota and Manatee County Libraries, including a "Family Day" on June 17. But even without the add-ons, #20Kshow – the hashtag for social media posts about the production, which are greatly encouraged – is a refreshing sea change.

The Huffington Post (NY)

2016-10-10

By Fern Siegel

Stage Door: Holiday Inn, Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea

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Another revamp, but a meaningful one, is Jules Verne's 1870 sci-fi classic, *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea*. Its sea creatures, submarine (the Nautilus) and nefarious Captain Nemo have been updated at the New Victory Theater.

Grad student Jules (Rick Miller) imagines himself back in time — and in his favorite story — trying to clean up the plastic-strewn sea. Plus, he's on an adventure with Prof. Aronnax (Suzy Jane Hall), who is busy investigating a scary underwater threat.

There are kidnappings by nasty Captain Nemo (Richard Clarkin), giant squids who have to be killed and a great escape. The action is augmented by interactive tech, which ensures the audience an entertaining and thoughtful experience.

Miller, who doubles as director, has the characters engage the audience, which enhances their fun. Credit Deco Dawson's wonderful multimedia projections and Yannik Larivee's set and eclectic costumes for bringing Verne's classic to life in such an exciting way, coupled with a strong eco-message.

There are heady themes here, and Miller and Craig Francis' adaptation doesn't shy away from confronting them — or throwing in the occasional literary reference, such as *Moby Dick*. The pacing keeps the action lively and introduces the 8+ crowd to a much-loved classic in an innovative way.

THE HUFFINGTON POST
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THE BLOG
Stage Door: Holiday Inn, Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea
10/10/2016 04:38 pm ET

Fern Siegel
Deputy Editor, MediaPost

As Jerome Kern once noted: "Irving Berlin is American music."
For fans, his greatest hits from Broadway shows and movie musicals are on display in *Holiday Inn*, billed as "the new Irving Berlin musical, now at Studio 54."

Roundabout Theater's Broadway tuner has revamped the 1942 Astaire/Crosby film, moving it to 1946. It's no longer a Christmas show; it's a tribute to Berlin's songbook.

Jim (Bryce Pinkham) decides to leave show biz and buy a Connecticut farm. His dancing partners, Ula (Megan Sikora) and Ted (Corbin Bleu), have other ideas.

Jim opts for the rural life; the others follow the bright lights. Scenes neatly move between the two.

Running a farm is tough, so when the going gets tough, it's time to put on a show! Jim transforms the farm into *Holiday Inn*, helped by sassy handywoman Louise (a standout Megan Lawrence), and Linda, a schoolteacher who doubles as a romantic interest (Lora Lee Gayer).

A compilation of Berlin's best loved songs, such as "Blue Skies," "Heat Wave," "White Christmas," "Cheek To Cheek," are shoehorned into the plot, though colorfully staged. That's thanks to Denis Jones' choreography, a hardworking ensemble and appealing leads.

Holiday Inn is strictly jukebox musical lite; bland and slow in the beginning. But it picks up in act two to deliver a breezy, feel-good musical.

Another revamp, but a meaningful one, is Jules Verne's 1870 sci-fi classic, *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea*. Its sea creatures, submarine (the Nautilus) and nefarious Captain Nemo have been updated at the New Victory Theater.

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TRENDING
Not Even Bill O'Reilly Believes Mike Pence's Nonsense About Women Voters
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theaterscene.net (NY)

2016-10-06

By Victor Gluck

Twenty Thousand Leagues under the Sea

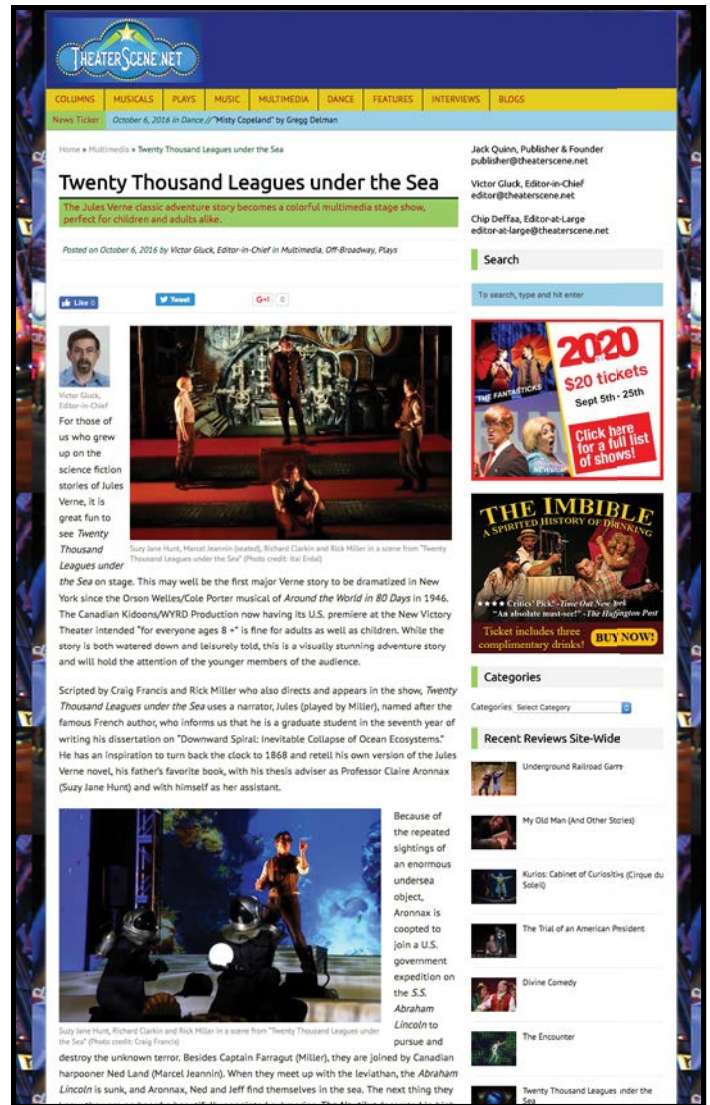
The Jules Verne classic adventure story becomes a colorful multimedia stage show, perfect for children and adults alike.

For those of us who grew up on the science fiction stories of Jules Verne, it is great fun to see *Twenty Thousand Leagues under the Sea* on stage. This may well be the first major Verne story to be dramatized in New York since the Orson Welles/Cole Porter musical of *Around the World in 80 Days* in 1946. The Canadian Kiddoons/WYRD Production now having its U.S. premiere at the New Victory Theater intended "for everyone ages 8 + " is fine for adults as well as children. While the story is both watered down and leisurely told, this is **a visually stunning adventure story** and will hold the attention of the younger members of the audience.

Scripted by Craig Francis and Rick Miller who also directs and appears in the show, *Twenty Thousand Leagues under the Sea* uses a narrator, Jules (played by Miller), named after the famous French author, who informs us that he is a graduate student in the seventh year of writing his dissertation on "Downward Spiral: Inevitable Collapse of Ocean Ecosystems." He has an inspiration to turn back the clock to 1868 and retell his own version of the Jules Verne novel, his father's favorite book, with his thesis adviser as Professor Claire Aronnax (Suzy Jane Hunt) and with himself as her assistant.

Because of the repeated sightings of an enormous undersea object, Aronnax is coopted to join a U.S. government expedition on the S.S. Abraham Lincoln to pursue and destroy the unknown terror. Besides Captain Farragut (Miller), they are joined by Canadian harpooner Ned Land (Marcel Jeannin). When they meet up with the leviathan, the Abraham Lincoln is sunk, and Aronnax, Ned and Jeff find themselves in the sea. The next thing they know they are on board a beautifully appointed submarine The Nautilus decorated in high Victorian style and run by Captain Nemo. He tells them they are free to roam the ship but they may not leave as he is at war with the world. Is he a genius or a madman? They engage in a series of underwater investigations at the bottom of the sea before Ned sends out a signal and the ships of the world discover the location of The Nautilus.

The live action elements of the show are performed on various platforms and screens on which are projected Deco Dawson's designs which give the dramatization a 3-D look. In addition to 2-D minatures, Miller manipulates tiny action figures (the scientists, etc.) and puppets (the Giant Squid, etc.) which are projected life size. Other moments take place in the audience. The audience is also asked to put their smart phones on mute to await developments. Among the magical moments are the walk on the bottom of the sea and the school of jelly fish. Aside from the marvelous visuals, the creators seem to want to have it both ways: although we are transported to a Victorian world, smart phones and computer monitors seem to work – although the younger members of the audience will most likely not notice the anachronisms.



<http://www.theaterscene.net/multimedia/twenty-thousand-leagues-sea/vic-tor-gluck/>

The cast of four play all of the roles. Besides being our narrator, Miller shows up in several roles, playing it for comedy. Suzy Jane Hunt in the dual role of Dr. Claire Wells and Professor Claire Aronnax is a stalwart heroine (standing in for Pierre Aronnax in the Verne's novel). Marcel Jeannin is a dour, sullen Ned Land, a man of few words. Captain Nemo is played by Richard Clarkin as a sinister, complex and conflicted man. Yannik Larivée is responsible for the clever set design on which the projections are used as well as the suitable costumes, both contemporary and Victorian. Shawn Kettner & Marcus Jamin created the puppet designs which are often amusing and obtain laughs.

Kidoons/WYRD Production of *Twenty Thousand Leagues under the Sea* is **an enjoyable and eye-filling multimedia stage version of a Jules Verne classic**. Slanted more toward the **adventure aspects than on the science fiction**, it is perfect family entertainment for children and adults alike. **It might even send the older folks back to the book.**

American Theatre (NY)

2016-07-26

BY EMMA HALPERN

Screen Time Onstage: Technology Is Changing the TYA Game

"Technology" can be a scary word if you're a parent. The dangers of too much screen time are a constant worry, not to mention the threat of sexting and cyberbullying. Still, policy experts agree that technology has great educational potential, and according to the Family Online Safety Institute, most parents believe technology has a positive impact on their children's lives.

Theatre companies seem to agree. New York City's New Victory Theater has been embracing technology in children's theatre for years, by presenting multimedia work and incorporating texting into pre- and post-show family events. Nine of the 12 shows the theatre will present in its 2016-17 season include projections, and companies that stop at New Victory on tour come in with increasingly sophisticated design elements.

"Companies can now get their costs down far enough and do more innovative things because they can employ technology so efficiently," says David Jensen, director of production at New Victory. He notes that the cost of using projections has come down in recent years, as has the cost of show controller consoles that allow shows of any size to achieve big effects. "It's great for the artists to be able to use the combination of lights and imagery to help tell their story."

Two shows in the New Victory's upcoming season demonstrate the new tech landscape particularly well, using multimedia to serve the story and connect performers and audience members. The first is *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*, which will open Sept. 30. The production was created by Canada-based Kidoons/WYRD Productions in association with the 20K Collective. Collaborators Craig Francis and Rick Miller combine a steampunk aesthetic with projections and live-feed video to create a world that pays homage to Jules Verne's 1870 novel while giving the story a contemporary feel.

"We decided early on that there would be a lot of movement in the play because the book implies movement," says Miller, who cowrote the piece with Francis and also directs. "We wanted to take the kind of creativity that Verne was exemplifying in his book, with regards to technology, and apply it to today. So we go from sophisticated multi-projector video mapping to manipulating action figures in front of a camera, and we really enjoy that playfulness."

Francis adds that the show's use of technology echoes how forward-thinking the book was at the time of its publication. "Captain Nemo is foreseeing the submarine and oxygen tanks," explains Francis. "He's foreseeing uses of electricity far beyond lighting and power. So it was exciting to see how we could update that."

The screenshot shows the American Theatre website. The article title is "Screen Time Onstage: Technology Is Changing the TYA Game" by Emma Halpern. The article text is visible, discussing the use of technology in children's theatre. A photo of a stage performance with a steampunk aesthetic is shown. The article is dated 2016-07-26.

<http://www.americantheatre.org/2016/07/26/screen-time-onstage-technology-is-changing-the-tya-game/>

Francis and Miller continue the multimedia experience in their work with a network of videos on the Kidoons website. Before and after the show, audience members can view videos of recurring cartoon characters interacting with characters from the company's theatre productions and exploring the shows' themes. "Our mandate is always to develop outreach, to educate and entertain kids, and this is where they're starting—on a screen," says Francis.

"You don't put all of your effort into one show that tours and dies, and your study guide is forever a pdf," adds Miller. "It's something that's continually expanding and growing."

BLOG: beyourbestmom.com (NY)

2016-10-01

By Milena Barrett

Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea at the New Victory #NYC #20KShow

New York City is the place to be for live theater! As a mom I especially love programming that attracts young children to the theater, and that's why I love the programs at the New Victory Theater. Friday night my family and I attended the New Victory and watched Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea, a Kidoons/WYRD production. To say it was amazing doesn't even begin to give this production the credit it deserves, I should add inspiring, creative, mysterious, thought-provoking, and lots of fun for all.

About Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea:

This modern reinvention of the science fiction classic, the source of countless film, comic book and graphic novel adaptations, now comes to brilliant life in this stunning, all-new theatrical production. The story follows Jules, a 36-year-old doctoral student, whose favorite novel happens to be Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea, writing a thesis on the dark future that awaits the earth's oceans and mankind. When Jules begins to sink into the depths of despair, he finds himself transported into the heart of his favorite story in search of a dangerous sea creature, alongside Professor Aronnax and Ned Land. See what mysteries await when Jules—now at the helm of the story's narrative—and his shipmates are taken captive aboard the Nautilus, and drawn deeper and deeper into the nefarious Captain Nemo's world.

My Thoughts:

This was all so unexpected! The trailer doesn't do the theatrical effects justice. Let me start there. The visuals are amazing and keeps your eyes glued to the stage. You truly feel as if you are either in the water or on board the Nautilus. We loved the modern tie in of using a phone to film in the show. I felt that it helped engage the younger audience members by combining the new technology with the story. Now my boys not only wanted to read the book itself, but use some of the techniques they witnessed for their own filming. This is what theater is about! Theater is like the show itself, it's about adapting and being in a constant state of motion and evolving! Four of us saw the show and we each took away a different message and we discussed our thoughts this morning in great detail. Now, that's a theater experience I love!

The acting was superb. When you have a show that only has four actors they need to own that stage and their characters, which they all did. It was no surprise to find out that Rick Miller not only acts in the show, but co-wrote it and directed it! His passion is evident and infectious! Craig Francis (co-writer) and Rick Miller have created a wonderful piece of work here and I loved seeing it at the New Victory Theater! It's a must see for ages 8 and up! You will not be disappointed!

NEW VIC BILL
THE NEW VICTORY THEATRE

TWENTY THOUSAND
LEAGUES
UNDER THE
SEA

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Photo Credit: Itai Endel

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Photo Credit: Itai Endel

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Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea at the New Victory #NYC #20KShow

October 1, 2016 By Milena Barrett — 5 Comments

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Parenting is basically asking whether people are wearing clean underwear, and wondering why the electric bill is so

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<http://beyourbestmom.com/2016/10/twenty-thousand-leagues-sea-new-victory/>

Scene Changes reviews

2016-03-15

Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea

There is something really big happening at London's Grand Theatre with a modern, digital recreation of Jules Verne's classic adventure tale, "Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea". This multimedia production is sometimes overwhelming in its power and complexity and it seems that Co-creators Rick Miller and Craig Francis have followed Captain Kirk into places no man has ever gone before.

In the early years of theatre as we know it, the ancient Greeks would sometimes salvage a play they couldn't finish by lowering one of their many gods onto the stage by machinery to solve the problems of ordinary dramatists. This Deus Ex Machina approach has been converted and updated to digital applications, stunning visuals and terrific sound effects while the Verne story is laced with modern references to endangered oceans and a threatened habitat for the creatures whose futures depend on a more careful tending to environmental concerns.

The show itself reminds me of an elaborate living cartoon, simple and direct, with four performers who shepherd the play's messages to the back row of the theatre with intensity and performing skill. Andrew Shaver is compelling as a young Verne, while Eric LeBlanc takes the adventurer Ned Land somewhere beyond where Kirk Douglas managed to go in the movie. Marie-Eve Perron as a lady scientist and Richard Clarkin as the mysterious Captain Nemo round out a show that will be talked about for some time to come.

It is an intense experience that seemed to overwhelm some of the senior theatre-goers whose rides on rollercoasters are long gone, but students out for the March Break will likely adopt the show as their own. As with "Boom" a few seasons ago, Rick Miller continues to entertain in a large way. The show runs to March 26th.



SCENE CHANGES
LET US ENTERTAIN YOU!

Previews and Reviews by Jeniva Berge
Covering the best of the Toronto entertainment scene! Updated weekly.

REVIEWS

Toronto Reviews: Chelsea Hotel: The Songs of Leonard Cohen | Gaslight | The Gay Heritage Project | Grey Gardens | In Search of Cruise Control | The Just | **Extended:** Kinky Boots | A Line in the Sand | Mistatim | No Strings (Attached) | Port Authority | Pyaasa | Salt-Water Moon | You Will Remember Me | **Ottawa Reviews:** Tuesdays with Morrie | Perfect Pie | Butcher | Boom | **London, Ontario Reviews:** Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea |

Chelsea Hotel: The Songs of Leonard Cohen

The legendary Chelsea Hotel in New York City would make a story in itself. It was a major stop-off for the Beat Generation of the 1950's from the greats of



Boom plays in the theatre of the National Arts Centre until March 12. Tickets: Online on the NAC's website: www.nac-cna.ca; In person at the NAC Box Office At all Ticketmaster outlets; By telephone 1-888-991-2787.
Reviewed by Alvina Ruprecht, an Ottawa based freelance theatre critic.

LONDON, ONTARIO
The Grand Theatre

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Tickets: at www.grandtheatre.com, by phone at 519-672-8800, or at the Box Office, 471 Richmond St.

Reviewed by Ric Wellwood, a London, Ontario based freelance theatre critic.

<http://www.scenechanges.com/reviews.html#sea>

The Beat Magazine

2016-03-12

Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea – An Immersive, Multimedia Experience

Kidoons and WYRD Productions' presentation of Twenty Thousand Leagues Under The Sea is not a faithful re-enactment of the Jules Verne classic tale. What it is, however, is a multimedia and multi-sensory re-imagining of the novel, which includes contemporary elements, that proves to be one of the most visually engaging and creatively dynamic presentations to grace the Grand Theatre stage in ages.

It is designed to be a family-friendly production, complementing an animated production to follow its run first here in London, then in New York. But one hesitates to use the term family-friendly due to the specific connotations that the term carries.

It is not "kiddie" in nature, though it can appeal to kids. And, even at 20,000 leagues under the sea, the themes and language used in the play may fly over the heads of the younger viewers. But the style and visual presentation of the production is innovative, gripping, and supersedes any plot inconsistencies or liberties taken.

The plot, as it is, starts in modern times, with a narrator who decides to immerse himself in the plot of the novel. There are themes of environmental responsibility and examinations of the human impact on our surroundings introduced, and those themes are used to serve as retroactive motivation for Captain Nemo's descent into madness and violence. There's an element of time travel, some unexplored pathos, and a resolution that comes together a little too quickly at the end, but little of that matters in the context of this play.

Twenty Thousand Leagues is not a great play in the traditional sense if you're looking strictly at plot and writing. But it is a great theatrical experience for all involved. The four primary characters are strong, particularly Shaver in the role of Jules (who also serves as the narrator). What the play does extraordinary well is transform the environment in which it's produced, using lighting, sound, technology, and visual effects to the fullest to create a world into which the viewer is immersed.

Clever use of lighting and screens transform the stage into everything from prison cells to an underwater wonderland filled with pulsating jellyfish. Layering of images, both physical and projected through a laptop and phone, add a depth to the presentation that is captivating to watch. Creative shifts in perspective enable new ways to portray everything from a casual dining experience to top-down views of motion. At one point the soft red glow of an angler fish works its way through the crowd. And this is all complemented by an ambient soundtrack that alternates between underwater sounds, mechanical noises from the submarine, and echo-inflected voices.

The multimedia experience continues during the intermission and even after the play ends. There are on-line elements that serve to drive the story forward and allow the viewer to continue to engage with the production after the fact.

There are some limitations to the family-friendly aspect of this play. As a viewer who is fully bilingual in English and French, some of the language used is certainly not appropriate for a younger audience. Though audiences in New York may not know the francophone equivalent to the F-bomb, there's a solid chance that some

the beat magazine

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Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea – An Immersive, Multimedia Experience

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SEARCH

Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea A Kidoons and WYRD Production Written by Craig Francis and Rick Miller Directed by Rick Miller Starring: Richard Clarkin as Captain Nemo Ned Land as Eric LeBlanc Marie Eve Hansen as Professor Aronax Andrew Shaver as Jules Run time: Two hours including intermission March 8-26, 2016 The Grand Theatre

Kidoons and WYRD Productions' presentation of *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* is not a faithful re-enactment of the Jules Verne classic tale. What it is, however, is a multimedia and multi-sensory re-imagining of the novel, which includes contemporary elements, that proves to be one of the most visually engaging and creatively dynamic presentations to grace the Grand Theatre stage in ages.

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<http://thebeatmagazineswo.ca/twenty-thousand-leagues-under-the-sea-an-immersive-multimedia-experience/>

Canadian kids will. The story line and some of the dialogue may not be accessible to youth either.

But as a multimedia and multi-sensory experience, *Twenty Thousand Leagues* is wonderful. The visuals and action on stage should captivate younger viewers, whilst those of us a little longer in the tooth can appreciate the combination of the production and the acting as an expansion of what theatre traditionally has been on the Grand's stage.

Yes, there are nods to the exploration of the power of nature and the nature of power. Yes, there are references to the potential impact on the future would come should the past have knowledge of our current state. And, yes there are fledgling examinations of character motivations that aren't seen to their full extent. But this re-imagining of Verne's novel is clearly not intended to be a character study, but rather the story is a backdrop to a multi-sensory experience that's designed to engage and delight.

Again, it's family friendly without the negative connotations of that term. Young or old should find plenty to enjoy in this production and it's worth seeing simply for the fact that it's a clever and compelling re-imagining of what a theatre experience can be.

Toronto Star
2015-07-14

20,000 Leagues Under the Sea takes audiences to a trippy underwater wonderland

Panamania's stage version of Jules Verne classic is kept afloat by a raft of impressive multimedia effects.

In Panamania's new version of Jules Verne's fantasy, Captain Nemo not only commands a submarine called Nautilus 20,000 leagues under the sea; he's also living in a Utopia of theatrical technology.

"Our idea was to take a Victorian novel and create a pop-up book," says Rick Miller, the co-producer, co-writer and director who also stars as Nemo in this startling new stage adaptation of 20,000 Leagues Under the Sea.

The show had its premiere at Daniels Spectrum theatre in Regent Park on opening weekend of the Pan Am Games, and its run will end with a Wednesday matinee. But in the minds of Miller and co-producer Craig Francis, this is just the start of something big. They are getting their act together and taking it on the road — as well as online.

Miller is known for solo shows such as Mac Homer (in which he mixed Macbeth with characters from the Simpsons). But he has also played roles in such mega ventures as Robert Lepage's nine-hour *Lipsynch* (seen at Luminato in 2009). He even had the title role in the 2011 musical film satire *Mulroney the Opera*. This Jules Verne underwater trip has a cast of four, but it feels like a mind-boggling departure from what we normally think of as intimate theatre.

The script and the acting are usually the chief strengths of the fringe. In this case, it's the special effects that are so compelling and engaging you can't take your eyes off the stage — even if you find the text and the acting rather flat, as I did.

What hooks you is the wonderland created by a team of wizards, including a projection designer, a sound designer and a puppet designer as well as a lighting designer and set designer.

Francis runs an online company called Kidoons aimed at a family audience. He and Miller were seeking a project that could work both as a live stage production, and online for Kidoons.

An updated, multimedia version of Verne's sci-fi literary classic of almost 150 years ago also happened to fit Panamania's chosen aqua-centric theme.

So it's not just a rewind of the book or the 1954 Disney movie in which James Mason played Captain Nemo. It makes a point of addressing contemporary water issues, partly through a character working on a thesis about the collapse of ocean ecosystems — and even going out of its way to include a feminist perspective here and there.

Still, it's the show's multimedia bag of tricks rather than its ideas that keep it afloat.

The screenshot shows a web browser displaying a Toronto Star article. The article title is "20,000 Leagues Under the Sea takes audiences to a trippy underwater wonderland". The byline is "By: Martin Kneelman Entertainment, Published on Tue Jul 14 2015". The article text describes the stage production of Jules Verne's classic, highlighting its multimedia effects and the role of Captain Nemo. A large image shows a stage scene with a man in a suit and a woman in a costume. The article is part of a "STAGE" section on the website. On the right side, there is a red sidebar with a "Démarrer" button and a "Google" logo. Below the article, there is a "Top News" section with various headlines.

<http://www.thestar.com/entertainment/stage/2015/07/14/20000-leagues-under-the-sea-takes-audiences-to-a-trippy-underwater-wonderland.html>

"We wanted to create a fun experience and explore stagecraft," Miller told me. "We asked ourselves 'How can we be creative and imaginative?'"

Having things pop up or down, or descend from pulleys the way sails do, became central.

The plan was to create layers of projections, with three projectors taking the audience to different places — playfully jumping from small scale to large scale scenes.

This may sound like a hugely expensive operation, but Miller says: "We're not a million-dollar show. We're a big little show."

The budget is around \$400,000. Funding from Panamania helped. So did grants from the Canada Council, the Ontario Arts Council and the Toronto Arts Council.

It started small, with workshops. And is still in the process of being tweaked.

One important fact is that this show is portable.

Leagues has been booked into London's Grand Theatre for a subscription run. And it is likely to have an extended life on the road.

"We have plans to take it around the world," says Miller. "We want to be able to pack up and take off."

Hispanic la jornada
2016-03-18

Sorprendente producción de Veinte Mil Leguas de Viaje Submarino

Pareciera que uno esta realmente en el agua y dentro del Nautilus, el submarino del Capitán Nemo. Las escenografías usadas en esta obra teatral son magnificas y creativas, lo llevan a la historia para vivirla junto con los personajes. Otros lo llaman la magia teatral; sin duda una versión actualizada de multimedia clásico de ciencia ficción literaria de Verne de casi 150 años.

Veinte mil leguas de viaje submarino, obra que se prenda en el Grand Theatre de London, Marzo 8-26, comienza con proyecciones de marionetas, muñecos que uno acostumbraba a jugar de niño. El narrador prepara el escenario con una historia de fondo muy ingenioso y gracioso que, con la adición de viajes en el tiempo, se transforma en una versión del cuento clásico de Julio Verne. Visualmente, siendo el motivo principal, la obra Veinte Mil Leguas de Viaje Submarino es una extraordinaria experiencia. En interior del Nautilus se encuentran ojos de buey que revelan maravillas subacuáticas, se es testigo de una visita a la Antártida, y de cuando en cuando el escenario se llena de medusas brillantes, un tiburones ...

En toda esta magia de sonidos y arte visual, de esta nueva tecnología teatral, en la obra se tocan temas profundos de ecología, ciencia contra la literatura, problemas paternos, la búsqueda del poder, teatro vs realidad, la narrativa teatral vs arte de acción. Pero la escena mas esperada por todos es la del calamar gigante. La escena de la llegada del calamar es poderosa con un toque de siniestro.

Por momentos esta obra se siente mas bien como comedia ya que gracias a los actores y directores de apuesta, Veinte mil leguas de viaje submarino es una experiencia tanto como lo es el teatro.

El objetivo de de esta nueva sorprendente adaptación teatral, dice Rick Miller, el co-productor, co-guionista y director, que también da vida a Nemo, era el tomar una novela victoriana y crear un libro pop-up.

Este viaje submarino de Julio Verne tiene un elenco de cuatro, pero se siente como un punto de partida alucinante de lo que normalmente consideramos como el teatro íntimo.

Si usted es amante del teatro, estará de acuerdo que el guión y la actuación son por lo general los principales puntos fuertes de la puestas en escena. En este caso, se trata de los efectos especiales que son tan completas y atractivas que no se puede quitar la vista de escenario.

Veinte mil leguas de viaje submarino continúa hasta Sabado 26 de marzo en el Grand Theater, www.grandtheatre.com

The screenshot shows the homepage of the 'hispanic la jornada BILINGUAL NEWSPAPER'. The main article is titled 'Sorprendente producción de Veinte Mil Leguas de Viaje Submarino' and includes a photo of the stage production. To the right, there are several promotional banners: one for 'HARLEM GARDENS' with a 'Save \$7' offer, another for 'LEARN ENGLISH' with 'FREE ADULT ESL' courses, and a third for 'HASSAN LAW' offering legal services. At the bottom right, there is a banner for 'London Music Conservatory' listing various instruments and a rock band.

<http://news.lajornada.ca/sorprendente-produccion-de-veinte-mil-leguas-de-viaje-submarino/>

Rogers TV

2016-03

The screenshot shows the Rogers TV website interface. At the top is a red navigation bar with 'ROGERS tv' logo and links for 'Shows', 'Videos', 'Volunteer', and 'Schedule'. Below the navigation bar is a search bar and a location indicator 'London: Cable 1'. The main content area features a large video player showing a scene from 'Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea' with three men on a couch. Below the video player is a weather forecast for the current day and the following days. To the right of the video player is a 'Related' section with two video thumbnails. The video title 'Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea - Wednesday, March 16, 2016' is displayed below the video player.

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Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea - Wednesday, March 16, 2016

Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea at The Grand Theatre

<http://www.rogerstv.com/media?id=237&rid=9&gid=249000>

ICI Radio-Canada

2015-07

The screenshot shows the ICI Radio-Canada website interface. It features a video player with a portrait of Rick Miller. Below the video player is a caption identifying him as 'RICK MILLER' and 'acteur, metteur en scène'. The ICI Radio-Canada logo is visible in the top left corner.

ICI RADIO-CANADA .ca

RICK MILLER
acteur, metteur en scène

The screenshot shows the ICI Radio-Canada website interface. It features a video player showing a scene from the play 'Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea'. The ICI Radio-Canada logo is visible in the top left corner.

ICI RADIO-CANADA .ca

<http://ici.radio-canada.ca/widgets/mediaconsole/medianet/7312922>

TFO 24.7
2015-07

The screenshot shows the TFO 24.7 website interface. It features a large video player with a scene from 'Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea'. To the right of the video player is a sidebar with the TFO 24.7 logo and a description of the show. Below the video player is a section titled 'Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea | PANAMANIA' with a description of the play. The TFO 24.7 logo is visible in the top left corner.

TFO 24.7

TFO 24.7, the new francophone point of view, and comments on French-Canadian social and artisans, artists, youths, entrepreneurs, leaders into French-Canadian culture from coast to coast, humour, and opinion videos: a show that offers Canadian identity.

Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea | PANAMANIA

The classical novel was adapted for theatre for the PANAMANIA cultural festival, slated to occur contemporaneously with the Panamerican Games and ParaPanamerican Games of Toronto. Together, Craig Francis and Rick Miller have dived back into Jules Verne's aquatic adventure to reemerge with a play full of shadow projections, puppets and illusions. This entrancing play is also a cry for help for oceans made sick and polluted by plastic trash. A story by Paul Ruhan.

EPISODES

FILTER

<http://www.tfo.org/en/universe/tfo-247/100463909/twenty-thousand-leagues-under-the-sea-panamania>

National Post
2015-07-13

New play premiering at Panamania arts festival takes audience Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea

Almost 150 years after Jules Verne wrote *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea*, and six decades after Disney turned the book into a technicolor motion picture, two Canadians have brought the classic tale to the stage.

The play was co-written by Rick Miller and Craig Francis and opened Panamania Saturday. The arts and culture festival takes place during the 2015 Pan Am and Parapan Am Games.

Both Miller and Francis read the classic science fiction novel when they were kids and were inspired to create a theatrical adaptation that would appeal to children — and adults.

"I love the story," Francis said. "I think it's a great adventure."

The Victorian-era tale is relevant today because there are still plenty of mysteries hidden in the depths of the world's oceans, he said.

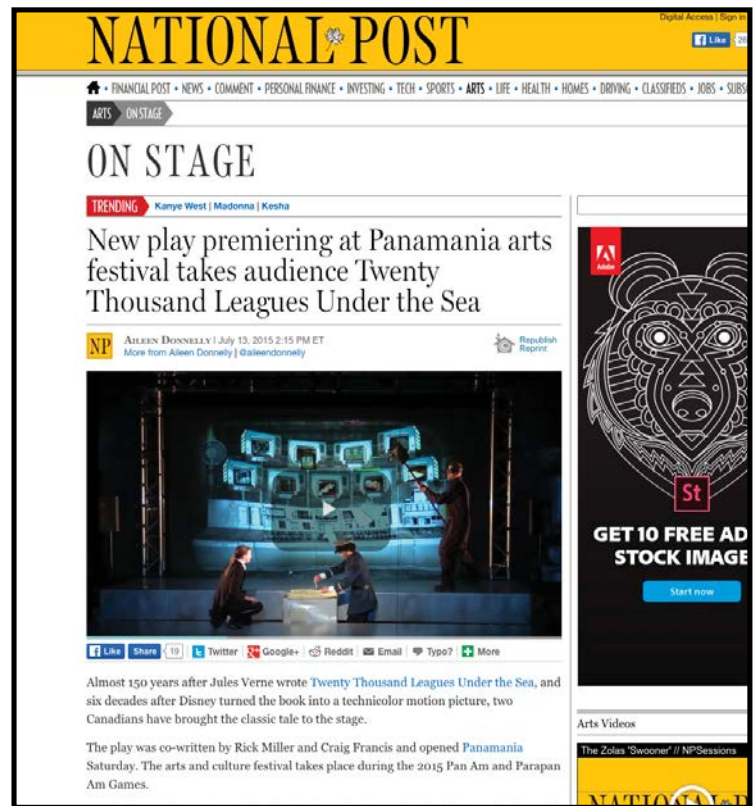
"That book is from 150 years ago, and now there's still parts (of the ocean) we haven't discovered, and there are others we've almost ruined, so we have this full circle effect," Francis said. "We're also in a new age of creativity and technology now, as we were in the enlightenment when this was written."

The playwrights hope that the production will inspire theatregoers to give some thought to state of the world's oceans. When Francis and Miller adapted the story for the stage, they added a modern-day character who is trying to finish a thesis on the collapse of ocean eco-systems when he is thrust into the world of his favourite story, *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea*.

It "is, ultimately, the Jules Verne story, but it's framed in such a way that it talks to people today, hopefully about their own connection to water," said Miller, who also directed the show and stars as Captain Nemo. "It's way more than just a play. We really are trying to create something that has an impact." After each performance, there will be an information session on water issues.

Miller and Francis assembled a "pan-Canadian team" of designers to mount the production. The team uses a combination of high-tech multimedia and low-tech scenic elements to convince the audience that the action is taking place on land, in a submarine and at the bottom of an ocean.

"We told all of our designers ... let's just use our imaginations and explode it and make it come to life on a flat surface in a community centre in Toronto," Miller said.



<http://news.nationalpost.com/arts/on-stage/panamania-twenty-thousand-leagues-under-the-sea>

While the book devotes pages to exhaustive lists of various species of fish, Miller and Francis were more concerned with developing the characters who are exploring 20,000 leagues under the sea. Early on, they decided that although Verne's book didn't include a female character, the play definitely needed a woman.

"It would be irresponsible of us not to bring in a certain feminist perspective," Miller said. He and Francis decided to turn one of the main characters, Professor Pierre Aronnax into a woman, Claire Aronnax, played by Mary-Lee Picknell.

"Women had very different roles back then," Miller said. But "she's someone with her own intentions, her own life."

The play runs until July 15 at Daniels Spectrum Theatre in Regent Park.

London Free Press

2016-03-11

Time warp brings classic novel into new league

It's a 19th Century adventure story colliding head-on with 21st Century technology.

The Grand Theatre presents *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea*, a multi-media production by some of the same people who brought last year's hit show, *Boom!* to the stage.

It's a modern day version of the classic Jules Verne tale with Captain Nemo and his adventures aboard his submarine, *Nautilus*.

The show, a Kidoons & WYRD Production, is the creation of Craig Francis, who produced *Boom!* and Rick Miller, its star and creator.

"Rick and I had been looking for a project to do together and I think this show brings together our passions to tell stories and bring stories to life," said Francis.

"I think audiences will be spellbound. There's something new happening every minute, but it's very well-paced.

"Although this is our fifth production, I consider the Grand Theatre our first theatrical run. This is a large, classic theatre with great height and flies that we need and you have to give credit to the Grand (artistic director Susan Ferley) for her support of works that are challenging to create but should be a joy for audiences to watch."

The show, on stage until March 26, mixes video with puppetry, lighting and sound, not to mention a few plastic action figures.

Richard Clarkin, a familiar face at Stratford (King Lear, Merchant of Venice, War of 1812 and Mirvish productions of Lion King, Heart of Robin Hood and Death of a Salesman), stars as Captain Nemo.

"I think it's being inside a great story," said Clarkin of his favourite aspect of performing in the show.

"Captain Nemo is mysterious, enigmatic, persuasive, powerful, a man who runs this incredible creation, *Nautilus*.

"He's got secrets, a great range of emotion and complexity. He's volatile, mysterious and a visionary. It's a rich treat for an actor to be able to humanize someone with such a brilliant mind."

In this show, the audience is first introduced to Jules, played by Andrew Shaver, a multimedia artist frustrated by his inability to write his thesis about oceans, who journeys back in time into his own version of the Verne story.

Francis said the show includes about two-thirds of the original story (a series of adventures) "but we've kept the key, memorable moments."

The other characters in the show include Professor Aronnax (played by Marie-Eve Perron) and Ned Land (Éric LeBlanc).

"I like this kind of work where things are running on multiple circuits," said Shaver.

The screenshot shows a web browser displaying the London Free Press website. The article title is "Time warp brings classic novel into new league" by Joe Belanger, dated Friday, March 11, 2016. The article text is visible, matching the content on the left. A video player is embedded in the article, showing a man (Andrew Shaver) interacting with a screen displaying a submarine. The website layout includes a top navigation bar with links like HOME, NEWS, SPORTS, etc., and a right sidebar with various advertisements and a "CONTRIBUTE" section.

<http://www.lfpress.com/2016/03/11/time-warp-brings-classic-novel-into-new-league>

"I think this show really pushes the envelope (of theatre). Your brain isn't just focused on the text, but you're manipulating plastic action figures, using different voices and interacting with other actors.

"It brings a real sense of playfulness."

Who will want to watch this show?

"This is a show that, I think, will appeal as much to a seven-year-old as their grandparents," said Shaver.

"It's a classic story and a very modern take on it that will compel people to think."