

# Entertainment Pages

## Tale of a Fateful Ship

**Theater** It was September 1964 when the

USS *Minnow* – carrying (sing along, now!) “Gilligan, the Skipper, too, the millionaire and his wife, the movie star, the Professor and Mary Ann” – was caught in a terrible storm and left its passengers shipwrecked on an uncharted South Pacific island. The show was canceled in 1967, but this goofy gang (and the bouncy theme song) has lived on in syndication, a cartoon series and several TV movies, becoming an indelible part of today’s pop culture.

Now the *Minnow* and her passengers have plunged headfirst into new waters: musical theater. *Gilligan’s Island: The Musical* is washing ashore at the Scherr Forum Theatre in Thousand Oaks.

The musical is the brainchild of Sherwood Schwartz, who created the original series, and his son, Lloyd J. Schwartz. It features 18 original songs and a new storyline that includes strange cave writings, encounters with little green men, and a chance to save the world.

The younger Schwartz attributes Gilligan’s long-lasting appeal to his dad’s basic theme of getting along. “How do you take people who would never be associated with each other, put them someplace where they can’t escape, and therefore have to learn to get along?” he says. “I think what people respond to – and the reason Gilligan has been successful – is that you see yourself as one of these people. Kids certainly see themselves as Gilligan.”

The show was also multigenerational and timely, says Schwartz. “Look at the film *Cast Away*, and even TV’s *Survivor*. Here you are –

stuck. How do you make it? That is totally timeless.”

Schwartz also promises answers to questions that have long plagued devoted viewers, such as why the brainy professor can’t figure out how to save the castaways, whether



Gilligan and his fellow castaways star in a new musical.

“Gilligan” is the bumbling hero’s first name or last, and why the Howells have so many clothes.

“This musical is exactly what Dad and I want it to be,” says Schwartz. “It’s the essence of everything Gilligan.”

*Gilligan’s Island: The Musical: For ages 8 and older. Wed. through Sun. Aug. 8 to 26. Call for times. \$27 to \$31; children’s prices available at some performances. Reservations required. Scherr Forum Theatre, Thousand Oaks Civic Arts Plaza, 2100 Thousand Oaks Blvd., Thousand Oaks. 805-583-8700 or 213-480-3232.*

– Terri Roberts

Parents  
A.  
www.parenthood.com • August 2001 • Parents’ First Choice for 21 Years