

Brings comic book character to life on stage

{mosimage}Eric Martsof, best known as Ethan Crane from NBC's Passions, has been cast as Li'l Abner in the Reprise! Broadway's best production. The show will run February 5th - 17th at UCLA's Freud Playhouse in Los Angeles, California.

All we can say is what fun! I had the pleasure of seeing Martsof star in the LA production of Jingle Bell Rock, where he hosted a cool yule evening of Christmas frolic and fun, assuring the audience would walk away in the holiday spirit. And we sure did! I can only imagine how much fun he'll be as Li'l Abner.

For the Reprise! Broadway's version of Li'l Abner, Martsof joins other notable stars including Cathy Rigby (Peter Pan) as Mammy Yokum, Fred Willard (Reprise! Promises, Promises and Anything Goes) as General Bullmoose and Brandi Burkhardt (Jekyll & Hyde) as Daisy Mae. The show will be directed by Michael Michetti and includes the creative team of Lee Martino (choreography) and Darryl Archibald (musical direction).

Based on the comic strip by Al Capp, Li'l Abner is, on the surface, a broad spoof of hillbillies but is also a pointed satire taking on any number of topics, ranging from an incompetent United States federal government to standards of masculinity. The plot centers on two things: first, Dogpatch, the town that is the main setting of the comic strip, has been declared the "most unnecessary town" in the U.S. and is set to be turned into a nuclear testing site; second, the water that Li'l Abner has been drinking all of his life is discovered to be a potion that makes men strong and handsome, but also utterly uninterested in sex.

Martsof is no stranger to live theater and is widely remembered for his critically hailed comic portrayal of the Pharaoh in Andrew Lloyd Webber's Joseph & the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat, touring with the production nationally for four consecutive years. In addition, he has appeared in over 40 musicals and plays, most recently starring in the new musical Knight Life (Sir Handsome Plotdevice/Dark Knight), and the new musical adaptation of Garry Marshall's Happy Days (Count Malachi). Tickets for Reprise! productions are available by calling (310) 825-2101. For more information visit www.reprise.org.