

# Sock 'n' Buskin to lock horns in Broadway battle

## Carleton theatre group prepares for show tune showdown April 5

BY SHANNON PARSONS

Amidst final essays, classes and performing *Bat Boy: The Musical*, Sock 'n' Buskin is getting ready for one final showdown to round out the 2008 season.

The battle?

Three arts groups from across Ottawa.

The weapons?

Broadway songs.

The prize?

Respect, glory and the title of winner of the 3rd Annual Showtune Showdown.

For Sock 'n' Buskin this is its first year competing, but the group feels its mastering of Broadway hits is a force to be reckoned with.

"It's been really hectic," said Sock 'n' Buskin team member Lucy Bamforth.

"Other groups participating are professionals so we're really trying to be on top of our game and have fun too."

The other groups that Sock 'n' Buskin will face off against April 5 are Suzart Productions and Zucchini Grotto Theatre Company.

Each team, comprised of four members, will perform four Broadway songs of their choosing.

The teams will then go head-to-head and compete to finish show tunes in a buzz-in style round.

If the teams can't finish a show tune, the audience can then jump in to steal the spotlight and

join in.

For event producer Rob Bowman, the show's crowd-pleasing elements are its best feature.

"It's everything an audience wants — it's comic, intimate, interactive," said Bowman.

"The songs pull from a broad swatch of Broadway hits, from modern to way back in the '50s."

He said he can guarantee that everyone in the audience will know at least one song.

From *Grease* to *Rent* to *Wicked* there is something for everyone, and everyone will be singing along.

"The night just flies by because people are having such a good time, they aren't just watching but they are getting right into it," said Bowman.

The friendly competition will also get the audience more involved as they cheer on their favourite team.

In order to name a winner of

the showdown three celebrity judges will weigh in, awarding points and commentary American Idol-style.

Assuming the roles of Randy, Paula and Simon are music director and conductor James Caswell, CBC radio host Kathleen Petty and executive director of Ottawa's Youth Services Bureau, Alex Munter.

Bamforth said the most exciting part of the upcoming event is seeing how her lifelong love of show tunes will match-up with her competitive nature.

"I'm super competitive so in the buzzer rounds I just know one of my teammates is going to lose a finger or something if they get in-between me and that buzzer," she said.

Joining Bamforth up on stage for the showdown are Katie Nerych, Janine Robinson and the star of *Bat Boy*, Zach Council.

Bamforth said the best part of

preparing for the showdown has been working with her teammates.

"We are performing such fun songs and the reason why it's fun is because of the team. And we are so ready to make this happen," she said.

Proceeds from the events go to Tone Cluster, a local GLBT choir looking to raise funds for its 15th-anniversary season next year.

Bowman said he expects the Bronson Centre, where the event will be held, to be packed.

He said Sock 'n' Buskin's participation this year will hopefully draw a younger crowd.

But praise and excitement from audience members from the last two Showcase Showdowns has been the best publicity for the event.

"The main question everyone has been hounding me with all year is 'When is the next one?'" said Bowman. □