


# Ticket

to entertainment

Your guide to entertainment in Fort Collins and Northern Colorado



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## events

### 'Master Harold' tackles prejudice and dancing with grace

**By STACY NICK**  
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It may not be as well known as other plays he's directed, but Morris Burns believes his latest Bas Bleu production, "'Master Harold' ... and the boys," will have just as much impact.

"It's not done very frequently," Burns said. "It's not a title that audiences know... Last spring I did 'Death of a Salesman' and with that, everyone and their sister knows the title."

The play, written by South African playwright Athol Fugard, takes place in a tea room in 1950s apartheid South Africa.

The drama focuses on the interplay between three characters - Sam and Willie, black waiters who are rehearsing for an impending ballroom dance contest as they work, and Hally, the white owner's 17-year-old year old son. As the three discuss the impending return home of Hally's alcoholic, crippled father



Peter Heacox/For the Coloradoan

**Earlie Thomas, left, as Sam, and Nathan Young as Master Harold star in Bas Bleu's "Master Harold ... and the Boys."**

#### **Bas Bleu's "'Master Harold' ... and the boys"**

**When:** debuting 7:30 p.m. Friday with 7:30 p.m. shows Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays with 2:30 p.m. matinees Sundays through Oct. 22.

**Where:** Bas Bleu Theatre, 401 Pine St.

**Cost:** Opening night tickets, including reception, \$30; adults \$19, seniors 65 and older \$15, students \$10; first Thursday night and first Sunday matinee are two for the price of one tickets. Group rates (10+) available.

**Information:** [www.basbleu.org](http://www.basbleu.org) or 498-8949



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the group dynamic changes from friendly to hostile and Hally's underlying prejudices come to the surface.

"The depth that these prejudices can take hold of an individual who has been raised in this very prejudicial society where whites reign supreme over blacks confronts our modern sensibilities," Burns said.

Earlie Thomas, who plays Sam, said he hopes audiences come away with a deeper realization that all people have the same basic human experience no matter the color of their skin.

Rehearsals for the play have been tough, and not just due to having to learn a South African accent, Thomas said.

"Morris presented me with this play about two years ago and I told him I couldn't do it," he said. "I had only been in one other play and I didn't have the courage to do something like this. He asked me again this season and this time I felt could do it."

With more acting credits under his belt, including the award-winning Colorado State University production "Beast on the Moon," and experience with top local theater experts including Bas Bleu's Wendy Ishii and CSU's Laura Jones, Thomas said he felt up to the challenge.

Burns was inspired to find an avenue for the play after a trip to Cape Town, South Africa four years after apartheid officially ended. "I'll never forget going to the National Theatre and the marketing director was giving the history of it, and we're standing in the lobby and above each of the entrance ways into the theater there was a sign that read 'We reserve the right to refuse admittance to anyone,'" he said. "I asked, knowing what that referred to, what that meant. The response was, 'Well those are to keep the rowdies out' ... Later I visited a township where the black members of Cape Town were sentenced to live. It was a series of shacks and one was a one-room house wallpapered in Lux soap wrappers."

The storyline is still pertinent to today's society, he said.

In a time where the local community is facing a financial burden that causes it to look at making the Human Rights Resource and Education Office a casualty of budget cuts, this is definitely one instance where everyone should see this play, Burns said.

"It really (exemplifies) the need we all have to respect, to love and to forgive each other," he said.

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