

# The Quilt Maker's Gift

Veddy Theatre Group's original adaptation a heartwarming gem at Amphitheatre's Winter Wonderland

## On stage

When: 6:30, 7:30, 8:30 p.m.  
Fridays and Saturdays through  
Jan. 3

Where: St. Augustine Amphitheatre, 1340 A1A South

Tickets: \$5 per person

Call: 806-2423

Online: [www.veddytheatre.org](http://www.veddytheatre.org)



Timothy Kompanchenko as the King and Quin New as Rico the soldier in "The Quilt Maker's Gift," on stage at 6:30, 7:30 and 8:30 p.m. every Friday and Saturday through Jan. 3 at the St. Augustine Amphitheatre.

brief but benevolent appearance by a ferocious-looking mountain grizzly (Eli TerKeurst), but nothing for youngsters in the audience to fear.

I urge everyone to go, to experience the magic of "The Quilt Maker's Gift."

## It's SHOWTIME!



**BOB FELDHEIM**

COMPASS COLUMNIST

Muslim Magomayev, 1942-2008, the song's original performer.

His long-suffering soldier-valet, Rico, played to perfection by teenager Quin New (who has ten years of stage experience in Memphis behind him) tells the King of a quilt maker who lives on a nearby mountaintop. "I must have one!" the King bellows.

Maurine Boles, a veteran of radio and theater, imbues this lovely soul with all the right nuances. She gives away every quilt she makes, but only to those who are poor

and needy. She refuses to give one to the King. "You must give everything you have away if you are ever to have a quilt," she tells the King.

"I don't give things away!" is the response. "I take them!"

Much of the play's exotic impact is due to the music accompaniment, an original score of five separate pieces, created and played on the keyboard by musical director Zeek Smith. Only 17 years old, Zeek has been composing and arranging for the past three years. His musical brilliance has been demonstrated at many performances at the St. Johns County Center for the Arts at St. Augustine High School. Smith is preparing to continue his musical education at the University of Florida next fall.

Effectively squeezing three separate scenic backdrops onto such a tiny stage is a challenge met beautifully by Fred Novak. The costumes by Tara Ferreira are top-notch. Gabrielle Davison handles the lights. There's a

**A**midst the Amphitheatre Winter Wonderland's many wondrous sights, sounds and activities competing for your attention in its current seven-week run (through Jan. 3) is a precious, heartwarming gem of a play, tucked away in the Legacy Room Studio Theatre, to the right and behind the main stage. "The Quilt Maker's Gift," produced by Kiki Tovey's Veddy Theatre Group — adapted and directed by Tovey, a recognized Ancient City theater professional since her arrival here from Los Angeles in 1999 — is only 30 minutes long, but every moment is magical and fulfilling.

All aspects — plotline, script, acting, scenic design, music direction, costumes, lighting and props — are of the highest professional standard. Miraculous, you might say, considering the challenges faced and overcome — three performances at 6:30, 7:30 and 8:30 p.m. every Friday and Saturday evening, at a \$5 ticket price. Ticket booths are in the plaza and at the theater door.

Heading the small cast in a bravura performance as the greedy, selfish King (who's ultimately transformed) is Timothy Kompanchenko, last seen as the creature in *Limelight's* "Frankenstein." In the show's opening moments, the King sings of his sorrows. "There must be something somewhere that will make me truly happy," he laments in a surprisingly strong, rich baritone, sung in Russian. Now 30 years old, and standing a formidable 6 foot, 3 inches, Kompanchenko came to America from the Ukraine 12 years ago. He dedicates his performance to