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The 'Snow' must go on

Un-Scripted Theater's improv holiday musical unpredictable, funny.

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Let It Snow



LOCATION: Shelton Theater, 533 Sutter St., San Francisco.

DATES: Playing through Dec. 19

TICKETS: \$10-\$15. Tickets can be purchased at the door or by visiting www.un-scripted.com.

The holidays are nice and all, but man, does it ever feel redundant sometimes.

Crowds, cranberry sauce, egg nog, extravagant department store window displays and the notorious leg lamp in "A Christmas Story" surely stir up the seasonal spirit.

Yet, isn't it all so dreadfully predictable?

The Un-Scripted Theater Company thankfully is making holiday traditions anyone's guess with "Let It Snow," an improvised musical now playing at the Shelton Theater.

Arguably the most versatile show in San Francisco every 90-minute performance, including story, songs, lighting, music and choreography is entirely made up as it goes along.

Embarking on a path rarely traveled in improvisational theater, Un-Scripted has ditched short sketches in favor of one long, continuous story.

The only constant is that the musical is based on a small town chosen by the audience.

One evening, the show was set and based around the people and sights of Wiggins Town in Colorado, and the next performance swept the audience away to a teensy town in Oklahoma.

On Sunday, at the company's first-ever matinee (yes!), Binghamton, N.Y., became the center of a musical never seen before and, most likely, never to be seen again.

The carousel and hot-air balloon capital of the world, the folks of Binghamton are proud of their hand-crafted wooden carousel horses, boasting over every carefully carved nostril and individually created eyelash.

Without having ever heard of Binghamton or its local specialty, Speedies, the cast manages a spectacle

in a tenor that would make Rodgers and Hammerstein proud.

The eve of the town's annual carousel festival finds Patty (Alexandra Perrucci), Binghamton's most renowned woodworker, tired of the whole business of going round-and-round.

Just for once, she'd like to move forward, from point A to point B, in a straight line.

Patty's sentiments draw the frustration of love-interest Jenkins (Brian McBride) who aptly notes, "Not all straight lines go in a straight line, ya know; not if they're on a sphere."

Meanwhile, Mr. Porter (Bryce Byerley) of Calliope Consolidated sets out to destroy the carousel capital and off-shore the whole kit and caboodle to Taiwan.

Thank goodness for happy endings and a big, huge, seven-person finale of "What comes around goes around in Binghamton."

"Let it Snow" is a very funny and festive frolic.

A refreshing change of pace for theatergoers, not to mention a hefty challenge for its ensemble, the unpredictable production fortunately yields an impressive result.