

## Voice of Homer Simpson Pedals With 'The Bicycle Men' For Chicago Tour de Force

Submitted by [HollywoodChicago.com](http://www.hollywoodchicago.com) [1] on December 13, 2007 - 11:57am

- [Dan Castellaneta](#) [2]
- [Joe Liss](#) [3]
- [John Rubano](#) [4]
- [Lakeshore Theater](#) [5]
- [Le Comedie du Bicyclette](#) [6]
- [Mark Nutter](#) [7]
- [Patrick McDonald](#) [8]
- [The Bicycle Men](#) [9]
- [The Simpsons](#) [10]
- [Theater](#) [11]
- [Theater, TV, DVD & Blu-Ray](#) [12]



CHICAGO – Frantic and fantastically funny, the musical-comedy play “[The Bicycle Men](#) [13]” invades Chicago again for a limited run at the Lakeshore Theater this time featuring the man – Dan Castellaneta – who is best known as the voice of TV’s Homer Simpson.



“The Bicycle Men”.

Photo credit: The Lakeshore Theater

The show, which originated with Castellaneta’s co-stars (Mark Nutter, John Rubano and Joe Liss) as “Le Comedie du Bicyclette” at the Los Angeles ImprovOlympics in April 2003, had a long run in Chicago that same year.

Loosely structured around a nebbish American (Castellaneta) and his bicycle tour of the French countryside, Nutter, Rubano and Liss play multiple characters designed to insanely disrupt the journey.

Set in a bicycle shop, youth hostel, restaurant, movie theater and most weirdly a talent show cabaret, each location inspires another surreal sketch with a musical number. Accompanied on piano by the multi-talented Nutter, Castellaneta and company sing a “Cynic’s Lullaby” and odes to “Fake Breasts,” “White Guys” “Church Barn” and most succinctly “Musical Hetero”.

Castellaneta – with his everyman demeanor – is perfectly cast as the ugly American content to play the straight man around the mad swirl of the other three crazies. Liss shines especially as a Marcel Marceau-type mute (in a Dana Carvey wig), a Dutch traveler who sings himself to sleep and an expert in the subtleties of dog poop.

Rubano is the glue of the show as the metaphoric bicycle god, and with his other characters, he steals every scene he chews.

His Texan-American ways with a happy physical abnormality would make George Bush proud while his turn as a puppet competes with Pinocchio. Playing a force of nature named Chester Manchester, he had the audience in paralyzing laughter and produced more gales with each characteristic expression.



Dan Castellaneta.

Photo credit: IMDb

The songs and choreography have a valid musical theater quality with standouts being the “White Guys” number with a boogie-woogie movement that is best described as spastic.

The brilliant song “Musical Hetero” – in which Castellaneta pleads that he is a straight man in a gay song-and-dance world – farcically manages to skew both ends of the orientation spectrum with several high kicks thrown in for added measure.

For fans of “The Simpsons,” it was also interesting to listen to Castellaneta’s natural speaking and singing voice and detect the familiar rhythm behind so many voices in that legendary series.

This play is outrageously off-kilter even down to the scene transitions where the players use broad physical comedy to transcend time and space. The men on stage have great fun with a loose, improvisational style that buries the laugh meter in the red zone and takes the audience along on their audacious bicycle ride.

As Homer Simpson himself once said: “I love legitimate thee-ay-ter.”

*“The Bicycle Men” has a limited run through Dec. 16 at the Lakeshore Theater in Chicago at 3175 N. Broadway. Phone 773-472-3492 for tickets or [click here](#) [14].*

By [Patrick McDonald](#) [15]

Staff Writer

HollywoodChicago.com

© 2007 Patrick McDonald, HollywoodChicago.com

**Source URL (retrieved on Apr 25 2024 - 10:27am):** <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/2007/12/voice-of-homer-simpson-pedals-with.html>

#### Links:

- [1] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/users/hollywoodchicagocom>
- [2] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/dan-castellaneta>
- [3] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/joe-liss>
- [4] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/john-rubano>
- [5] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/lakeshore-theater>
- [6] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/le-comedie-du-bicyclette>
- [7] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/mark-nutter>
- [8] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/patrick-mcdonald>
- [9] [http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/labels/the\\_bicycle\\_men.html](http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/labels/the_bicycle_men.html)
- [10] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/the-simpsons>
- [11] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/theater>
- [12] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/dvd-theater-tv-news>
- [13] <http://www.thebicyclemen.com>
- [14] <http://www.lakeshoretheater.com/ShowDetail.aspx?ShowID=70>
- [15] <mailto:pat@hollywoodchicago.com>