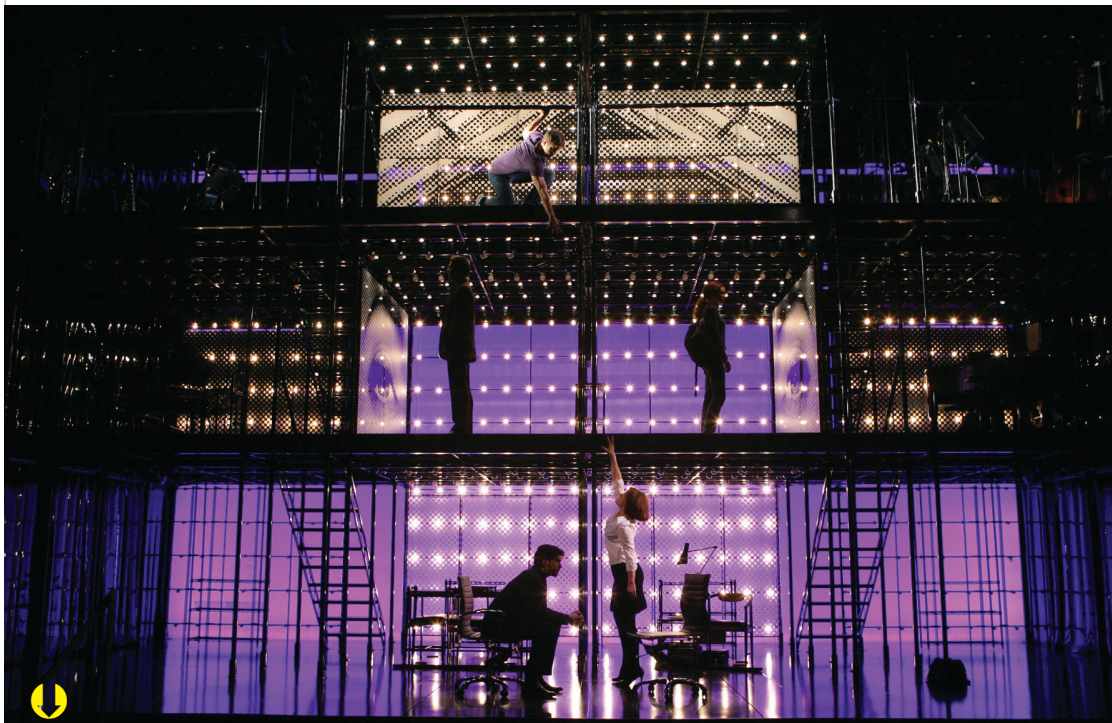


Curtain Call

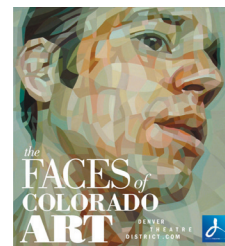
This month marks the height of Denver's theater season. Here are our picks to satisfy the toughest critics. —KAZIA JANKOWSKI



A BRIGHT FUTURE?

Denver's theater district lights up.

Eighty years ago, light bulb inventor Thomas Edison deemed Denver's Curtis Street the brightest roadway in America, thanks to the street's dazzling theater signs. But as many of those theaters disappeared mid-century,



the neighborhood around the Denver Performing Arts Complex went dark. That is until the Denver Theatre District launched its **Outdoor Art Gallery** in 2009. The project uses events, billboards, and, now, massive LED screens that cycle public art and advertisements, to create something akin to New York's Times Square—with a twist. "We said, 'Yes, you can put up commercial advertising, but you need to share some of that signage with [public art],'" says executive director David Ehrlich. Other cities are taking notice, including San Diego, Philadelphia, and San Francisco. "If you're looking to build the next Times Square, this is not your model," Ehrlich says. "If you're building a neighborhood, this is your model." —NG

For music lovers:

Next to Normal

Mental illness is rarely the stuff of popular musicals, let alone Broadway's biggest hits. But this gripping show, which earned a 2010 Pulitzer Prize for drama and garnered three Tony Awards in 2009, tells the story of a mother struggling with mental illness and how it affects her family—all set to a contemporary score. *Jan. 4-16, Ellie Caulkins Opera House*

calculate where to sit in a baseball stadium to catch a home-run ball. Though his math is correct, he drops the ball. Legal battles and general mayhem ensue as the show traces the story of a man rebuilding his life. *Jan. 21-Feb. 26, Space Theatre at the Denver Performing Arts Complex*



tic director of the Colorado Shakespeare Festival, brings to life this classic about King Henry II of England, the wife he's imprisoned, and their sons, intertwining deception, politics, and humor. *Jan. 25-Feb. 20, Arvada Center for the Arts and Humanities*

(off-Broadway theater awards) in 2010. *Jan. 22-Feb. 26, Curious Theatre*

For late-night comedy watchers: Kafka on Ice

In this Ice Capades-style show (with mock ice), the tortured Czech writer Franz Kafka puts on skates for a slapstick retelling of the author's *Metamorphosis*, the story of a traveling salesman who turns into a bug. *Jan. 28-Feb. 19, Buntport Theater*



For sports fans:

The Catch

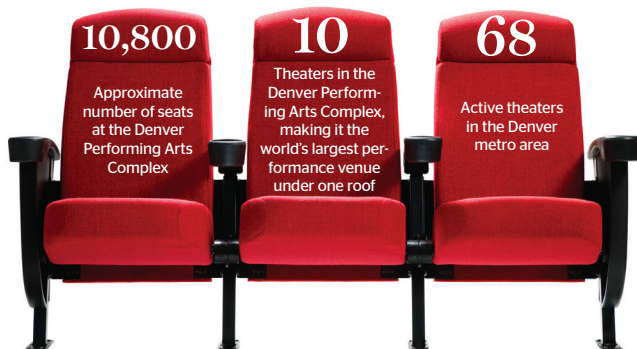
A failed dot-commer gambles that he can mathematically

For Shakespeare buffs: The Lion in Winter
Philip Sneed, producing artis-

For friends: Circle Mirror Transformation

Quirky, misfit characters are at the heart of this play about a small community drama class. The tender and funny interactions between an eclectic gaggle of strangers earned several Obie Awards

MILE HIGH DRAMA



GET INVOLVED

Help end homelessness—in your PJs.

The Broncos season may not have gone as hoped (read: it was terrible), but that doesn't mean we can't support our hometown team. Players Champ Bailey and Kyle Orton are promoting Denver's Road Home's sixth annual fund-raiser to end homelessness. Buy your tickets now for the February 10 shindig—it's the biggest **Pajama Party** in the Mile High City, and in past years even Governor John Hickenlooper has dressed up. www.pjday.org —NG

