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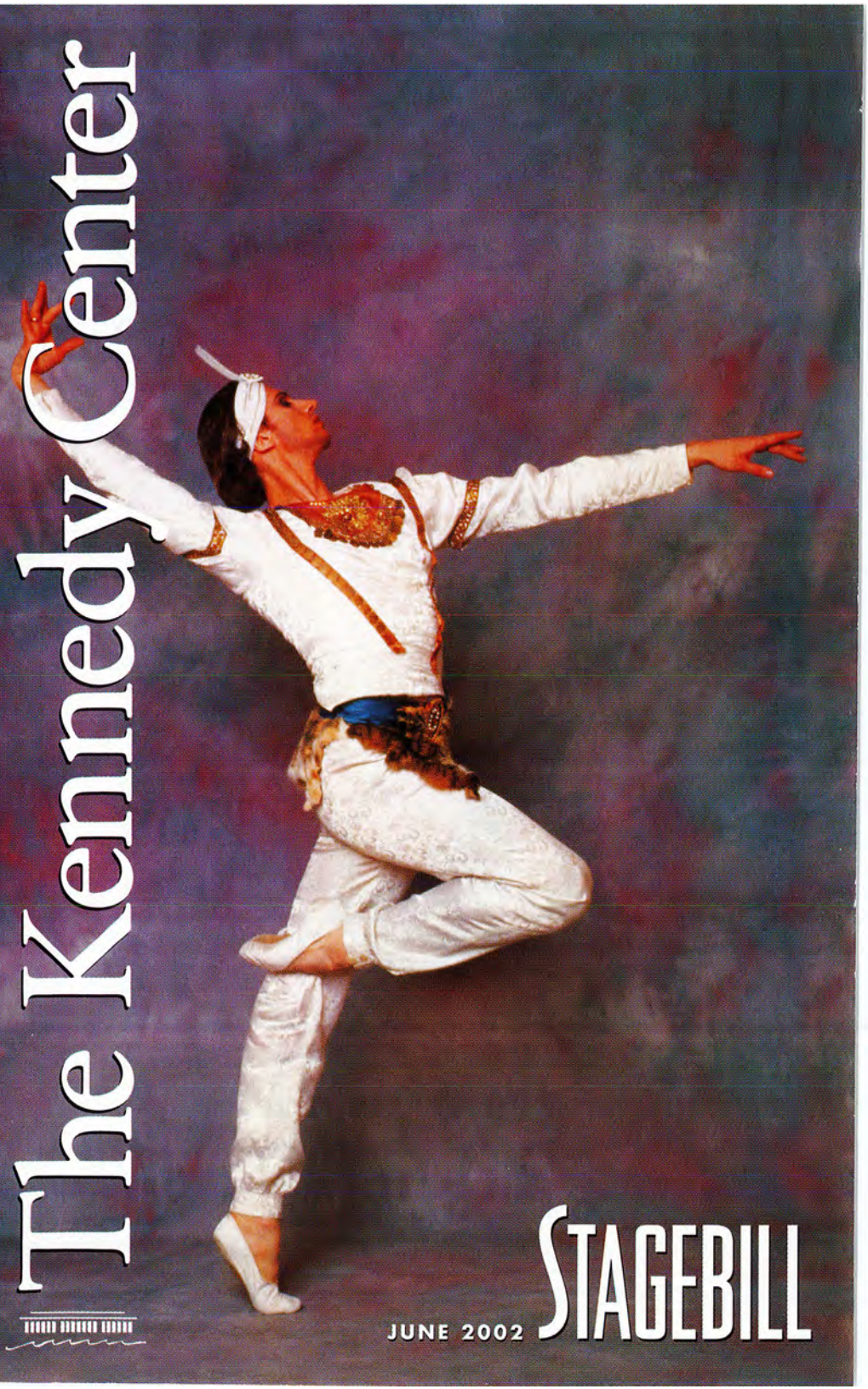

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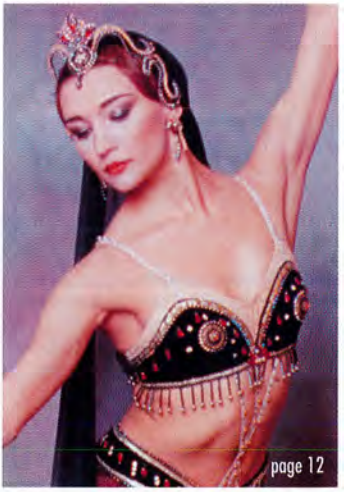

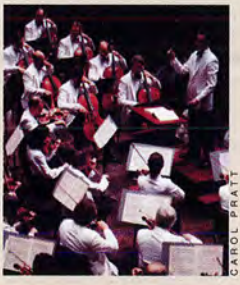
CAROL PRATT

For the third year, the **National Conducting Institute** culminates with a thrilling summer concert in the Kennedy Center Concert Hall on June 29. Created by National Symphony Orchestra Music Director Leonard Slatkin, the Institute is dedicated to the advanced development of exceptionally gifted conductors. **Mei-Ann Chen**, **Sarah Hatsuko Hicks**, **Danail Rachev**, and **Jean-Philippe Tremblay** were competitively selected for the Institute and to lead the National Symphony Orchestra in this extraordinary event.

ON THE COVER: The Bolshoi Ballet's Andrei Uvarov in *La Bayadère*, part of the Bolshoi Ballet's engagement June 11 through 16 in the Opera House. Photo by Vladimir Glynin.

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side by side

Mandy Patinkin sings Sondheim at the Terrace Theater this month.

Legendary interpreters Barbara Cook and Mandy Patinkin add their voices to the Kennedy Center Sondheim Celebration.

BY ROBERT SANDLA

Stephen Sondheim writes for musical theater, for great big Broadway shows that trumpet their artistic ambitions from the first beat of the overture. His music and lyrics can pin you to the back of your seat in the back row of the grandest opera house. His songs play just as strongly in the solo spotlight. Smart, sophisticated, wryly romantic, his work can feel tailor-made for the intimate performance in which we get to know an artist up close and personal. The Kennedy Center's Sondheim Celebration looks at both sides of Sondheim. Over the Celebration's five months, you can catch fresh productions of six of his musicals, and see two of theater's brightest stars perform in their own individual evenings of Sondheim's music. From June 5 through 16, and August 14 through 18, Barbara Cook holds court in the Terrace Theater, while Mandy Patinkin takes over the same venue from June 18 through 30.

Barbara Cook is...let's face it, Barbara Cook is a goddess. Broadway's favorite ingenue in the 1950s and '60s, Cook was the first Cunegonde in Leonard Bernstein's *Candide*, Marian the Librarian in *The Music Man*, and the lovelorn Amalie in *She Loves Me*. Shifting her attention to cabarets and concerts, she has been spectacularly successful turning show tunes into art songs. Cook has flawless taste, and a voice that glides like liquid mercury on a sheet of silver.

At the Kennedy Center, Cook performs her *Mostly Sondheim* concert, which features songs Sondheim wrote—and ones he wishes he had. Cook sings a definitive version of Sondheim's aching "Losing My Mind," and then vamps her way through the torchy, hilarious "Hard-Hearted Hannah."

With a soaring tenor and a muscular delivery, Patinkin is an intense singer who finds the drama and wit in every note. Patinkin, who won a Tony Award playing Che Guevara in *Evita* (1980), has earned additional Tony nominations for musicals and plays, performed Shakespeare and contemporary dramas, and won acclaim for his film and television roles, notably *Chicago Hope*'s high-powered Dr. Jeffrey Geiger. He was nominated for a 1984 Tony Award in the original production of Sondheim's *Sunday in the Park with George*, in which he played to perfection Georges Seurat, the painter who invented pointillism.

For his Kennedy Center concerts, Patinkin will perform an all-Sondheim evening. He has a huge vocal and emotional range, so watching him tackle Sondheim's wildly eclectic repertoire should make for one of the season's most compelling dramas.

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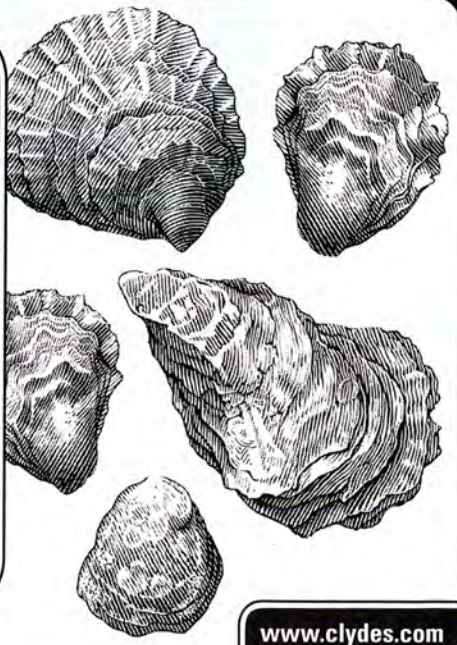

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PLAYING FAVORITES

The National Symphony Orchestra and guest conductor Osmo Vänskä present an exhilarating festival of new and familiar masterpieces.

BY JEREMY D. BIRCH

Osmo Vänskä will conduct the Festival of Favorites this month.

What makes a certain piece of music a favorite? Is it that resounding crescendo? A delicate violin solo? The triumphant chorus you hum along with as you're driving with the top down? The National Symphony Orchestra gives audiences a chance to hear old favorites and discover new ones in an exciting new festival, June 20 through 22. Led by guest conductor Osmo Vänskä, the Festival of Favorites explores some of the world's most beloved classical works, by such symphonic masters as Beethoven, Debussy, Mozart, Mendelssohn, and Sibelius.

Praised for his intense, dynamic performances, his compelling, innovative interpretations, and the close rapport he establishes with the musicians he leads, Finnish conductor Vänskä made his debut with the NSO in March 2000. Currently the music director of the Lahti Symphony Orchestra in Finland, he is also chief conductor of the BBC Scottish Symphony

The NSO will play selections from Mozart and Ravel to works by key Scandinavian composers.

Orchestra in Glasgow, and will become the Minnesota Orchestra's music director beginning in 2003.

The Lahti Symphony Orchestra (LSO) was a virtual unknown before Vänskä took the helm. Under his leadership, the LSO has garnered international attention through its collection of Sibelius recordings, including an original version of his Violin Concerto, which brought the LSO the 1991 Gramophone Award for Record of the Year and for Best Concerto Recording, its first awards of many. "It's known as the Lahti phenomenon," wrote the *Financial Times*, "a conductor inspiring his orchestra, an orchestra interacting with its community, a fusion of interests that makes the world sit up and listen."

In the Festival of Favorites, Vänskä will dazzle audiences with his "glittering and thunderous" interpretations (*The Herald*, Glasgow) of classic works. In addition, each evening, National Public Radio commentator and author Miles Hoffman will involve the conductor, soloists, and audience in insightful discussions about the music to be performed.

For the opening night of the Festival, the NSO will perform Debussy's first important orchestral work—*The Afternoon of a Faun*—with its voluptuous textures and one of the most celebrated solo passages for flute in music literature. French pianist Louis Lortie and

continued on page 22

RUSSIAN REVIVAL

The Bolshoi is one of the world's great ballet companies, with a thrilling style, a storied history, and impassioned performers. The company's Kennedy Center appearance this month inaugurates the Catherine B. Reynolds Foundation Series for Artistic Excellence.

BY ROBERT JOHNSON

MIKHAIL M LOGVINOV

Dimitri Belogolovtsev in Swan Lake

Grandeur has never been hard to muster at the Bolshoi Ballet in Moscow. Bolshoi means "big" in Russian, encouraging the members of the company to dance boldly, to make extraordinary, dramatic gestures, and to express themselves with passion. The Bolshoi's vast scale obliges both dancers and audiences to think big. Magnificence is part of the company's identity.

Founded as a commercial enterprise in 1776, the company gained an imperial charter in 1806 and continues to thrill audiences at its glittering home, the historic Bolshoi Theatre, erected in 1825. As a touring organization, the Bolshoi has fired the imaginations of audiences around the world.

Featuring brilliant young soloists, the flagship troupe from Moscow returns to the Kennedy Center Opera House this year as the inaugural event in the Catherine B. Reynolds Foundation Series for Artistic Excellence. The ten-year performance initiative, funded through a leadership grant of $10 million from the Catherine B. Reynolds Foundation, enables the Kennedy Center to select and produce unique annual performances or collabora-

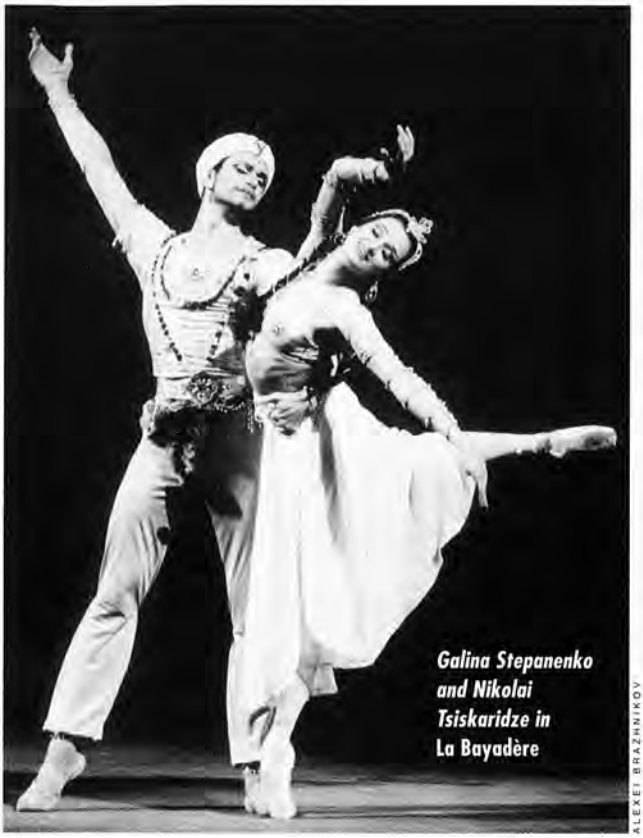
Galina Stepanenko in **Swan Lake**

MIKHAIL M. LOGVINOV

tive efforts between artists in opera, theater, ballet, symphonic music, jazz, or modern dance. Each year, for the next ten years, Kennedy Center president Michael Kaiser will select and produce a world-class production to showcase in the series; this first offering joins members of the Bolshoi Opera with the Bolshoi Ballet.

The company will perform a gala event, *The Glory of the Bolshoi*, an evening of performances by the Ballet, Opera soloists, and Chorus of the Bolshoi Theatre, on June 11. The Bolshoi will alternate the evening-length classics *Swan Lake* and *La Bayadère*, both staged after the 19th-century originals by Lev Ivanov and Marius Petipa, June 12 through 16. *Swan Lake* features Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky's most romantic ballet score, while Ludwig Minkus, the dependable house composer of Russia's former Imperial Theaters, wrote the music for *La Bayadère*, a tale of exotic intrigue set in India.

Although the Bolshoi suffered from the departure of many dancers in the political and economic tumult of the 1990s, the company now boasts some



Galina Stepanenko and Nikolai Tsiskaridze in La Bayadère

ALEXEI BRAZHNIKOV

The Bolshoi boasts some thrilling, up-and-coming dancers.

thrilling up-and-comers. Kennedy Center audiences will see the powerhouse Maria Alexandrova play the role of Gamzatti, the Rajah's jealous daughter, in *La Bayadère*, while the electrifying Nikolai Tsiskaridze will play Solor, the ballet's hero. At the opening-night gala, young Anastasia Goriacheva will dance as Masha in former Bolshoi director and choreographer Yuri Grigorovich's *Nutcracker* pas de deux. Goriacheva created a sensation in New York two years ago, when she emerged from the corps de ballet as a last-minute substitute for the ballerina who was scheduled to dance the lead in the first movement of George Balanchine's *Symphony in C*.

Readers who are attentive to program changes will observe that the Bolshoi's artistic direction has evolved since the troupe's sold-out visit to Washington in 2000. The company's esteemed conductor, Gennady Rozhdestvensky, has become general director of the Bolshoi Theatre, replacing Vladimir Vasiliev; Boris Akimov, a revered teacher, has assumed responsibility for the ballet company in place of Alexei Fadeyechev.

Among the previous administration's accomplishments was its openness to new choreography. Vasiliev and Fadeyechev threw open the doors to ballets created by Russian and Western ballet masters.

The company's artistic direction has evolved since its last Kennedy Center appearance.

According to Akimov, openness is the company's official policy. "This season we acquired *La Passacaille* and *Pique Dame*, by Roland Petit," Akimov says, referring to the celebrated French choreographer. "*Pique Dame* was a world premiere created especially for our dancers. Also, for the first time ever, we performed Frederick Ashton's *La Fille mal gardée.* Our idea is gradually to acquire the masterpieces of world choreography."

The director adds that young Russian choreographer Alexei Ratmansky has been invited to realize the ballet *Bright Stream*, to Dmitri Shostakovich's score, for the Bolshoi's fall season. Choreographing *Bright Stream* was one of Grigorovich's long-held dreams. "Finding new choreographers is a great problem, not only in Russia, but all around the world," Akimov acknowledges. "We are constantly on the lookout for new talents.

"We have to preserve our base—our classical heritage," Akimov continues. "On the other hand, new works are very important. The main thing is to perform these productions on a very high professional level."

VLADIMIR OLYNIN

Nadezhda Gracheva in La Bayadère

Robert Johnson is the dance critic for The Star-Ledger *in Newark, New Jersey.*

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with special guest
Laura Benanti

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"June is Bustin' Out All Over" ..... *Carousel* (1945)

"Good Thing Going" ..... *Merrily We Roll Along* (1981)

"Merrily We Roll Along" ..... *Merrily We Roll Along* (1981)

"Johanna" ..... *Sweeney Todd* (1979)
Soloist: Jeff Mace

"I Remember Sky" ..... *Evening Primrose* (1966)
Laura Benanti

"The Gentleman is a Dope" ..... *Allegro* (1947)
Laura Benanti

"On the Steps of the Palace" ..... *Into the Woods* (1987)
Laura Benanti

"Stepsister's Lament" ..... *Cinderella* (1957)
Eric Johnson, Bill Sorenson, Todd Paul

"Somewhere" ..... *West Side Story* (1957)
Potomac Fever

"Bali Ha'i" ..... *South Pacific* (1949)
Potomac Fever

"I Have Dreamed" ..... *The King and I* (1951)
Laura Benanti and GMCW

"A Weekend in the Country" ..... *A Little Night Music* (1973)

Anne: Laura Benanti
Petra: Stuart Goldstone
Fredrik: Brandon Dubroc
Charlotte: Jim Galdieri
Carl-Magnus: Martin Good
Henrik: Peter Fox

Intermission

"Preludium" ..... *The Sound of Music* (1959)
Rock Creek Singers
"Morning Hymn" and "Alleluia"
"The Sound of Music"
Laura Benanti
"Maria"
Xerxes Spencer, Eric Belkengren, Joseph Bloomer, Bob Wonneberger
"I Have Confidence"
Laura Benanti
"Do Re Mi"
Laura Benanti, Bob Sheavly, Barrett Whitener, David Weidner, Giuseppe DeBartolo, Chuck Walker, Edward Oseroff, Stuart Goldstone, Todd Katschke
"Climb Every Mountain"
Laura Benanti and GMCW

"Not While I'm Around" ..... *Sweeney Todd* (1979)
Soloist: Brad Boekeloo

"You've Got To Be Carefully Taught" ..... *South Pacific* (1949)

"Boys and Girls Like You and Me" ..... *Cinderella* (1957)

"You'll Never Walk Alone" ..... *Carousel* (1945)
Laura Benanti and GMCW

COMPOSERS AND LYRICISTS

Stephen Sondheim (music and lyrics)

Merrily We Roll Along
Sweeney Todd
Evening Primrose
Into the Woods
A Little Night Music

Leonard Bernstein *(music)* and Stephen Sondheim *(lyrics)*

West Side Story

Richard Rodgers *(music)* and Oscar Hammerstein *(lyrics)*

Carousel
Allegro
South Pacific
Cinderella
The King and I
The Sound of Music

CHORAL ARRANGERS

"June is Bustin' Out All Over" ..... Ron Abel
"Good Thing Going" ..... Scott Henderson
"Merrily We Roll Along" ..... Eddy Clement
"Johanna" ..... Paul Leavitt
"Bali Ha'i" ..... Daniel Meyer
"I Have Dreamed" ..... Alex Rybeck
"Climb Every Mountain" ..... Daniel Meyer
"Not While I'm Around" ..... Tim Sarsany
"You've Got To Be Carefully Taught" ..... Ron Abel
"You'll Never Walk Alone" ..... Daniel Meyer

NARRATORS

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Notes on the Program

On the surface, Oscar Hammerstein II and Stephen Sondheim are an unlikely musical pairing. (The two were great friends, but more about that later.) Hammerstein (1895–1960) is known for his painstakingly simple and direct expressions of emotion, many of them conveyed through pastoral images: a bright golden haze on the meadow, maybe, or a lark who is learning to pray. Sondheim (1930–), on the other hand, is conflicted, complicated: He's sorry-grateful and articulating those God-why-don't-you-love-me-oh-you-do-I'll-see-you-later blues.

But consider this: Their careers, taken together, trace almost the full history of the 20th-century American musical. Hammerstein's credits commence with something called *Always You* in 1920, and through the next decade his innovations in the operetta form spawned such successes as *Rose Marie, Sunny, The Desert Song, The New Moon,* and the era's pinnacle, *Show Boat,* which he wrote with Jerome Kern. Daring in its subject matter and audacious in its conception, it became one of the musical theater's handful of essential works.

The 1930s were comparatively hard times for him, but when Hammerstein joined up with Richard Rodgers in 1943 for an unlikely project called *Away We Go!,* based on the play *Green Grow the Lilacs,* he found an ideal project and an ideal collaborator. "No legs, no jokes, no chance" was one wag's comment when the show tried out in New Haven, but its serious themes, integration of story and score, and dramatic use of ballet overwhelmed all doubters, and under its eventual title, *Oklahoma!,* the show changed the face of the musical.

Rodgers and Hammerstein were only beginning. They produced eight more works for Broadway—"musical plays" as opposed to musical comedies—among them *Carousel* (1945), *South Pacific* (1949), *The King and I* (1951), and their finale, *The Sound of Music* (1959).

Sondheim's Broadway run began in 1957, when he provided the lyrics for *West Side Story.* He performed the same role on *Gypsy* two years later. Two jobs, two hits—but though his lyric-writing gifts were acclaimed, he wanted to write music as well, which he duly began to do with *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum* in 1962.

By 1970—a half-century after *Always You*—Rodgers and Hammerstein-style musical plays were still widely staged on Broadway. It was in that year that Sondheim, working with producer-director Hal Prince, came out with *Company,* the first of the pair's "concept musicals." The show was a consideration of marriage and other relationships, and the songs, rather than advance the action, were used generally to comment on it.

Having steered *Company* to success, Sondheim and Prince continued with *Follies, A Little Night Music,* and *Pacific Overtures,* taking on such uncommercial themes as age, disillusionment, and the clash of cultures, before bringing out the work many consider their greatest, *Sweeney Todd.*

He and Prince moved in different directions in the early 1980s, and the years since have seen Sondheim continue to create the prickly, provocative, utterly distinctive kind of work for which he has become known: *Sunday in the Park With George, Into the Woods, Assassins, Passion.* Next year he hopes to bring out yet another new work, *Gold!.* It's a musical comedy—and it marks his professional reunion with Prince.

So, different as they are, Hammerstein and Sondheim are irrevocably linked in the musical theater's development. But the history that ties them is personal as well. The two met in the 1940s and forged a relationship as mentor and student, Hammerstein offering guidance and criticism of his young friend's ideas and work and emerging as a kind of surrogate father in the process. Until the older man's death, Sondheim would routinely confer with him about his work, more often than not heeding his counsel.

In 1960 Oscar Hammerstein was dying. He gave Sondheim a photograph of himself, and, feeling sheepish, Sondheim asked him to sign it. A few moments later the job was done. The inscription read, "For Stevie, my Friend and Teacher."

As Hammerstein had long known, if you become a teacher, by your pupils you'll be taught.

—Chip Crews

(continued on page 37)

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continued from page 11

French pianist Louis Lortie

Vänskä has been praised for his intense, dynamic performances.

the Orchestra follow with one of Ravel's last compositions, the Piano Concerto in G major, a jazz-infused virtuoso divertissement in three glorious movements. The concert closes with Rachmaninoff's grandly melodic—and unmistakably Russian—Second Symphony.

The Festival's second evening will feature a tribute to a trio of Scandinavian composers. One of Vänskä's favorite works—*Cantus Arcticus*: Concerto for Birds and Orchestra, an experimental and beautifully sonorous work with birdsong, written by Finland's Einojuhani Rautavaara—will start the evening off. Pianist Laura Mikkola then joins the Orchestra to perform Grieg's triumphant Piano Concerto in A minor, a celebrated musical embodiment of the Norwegian spirit. The evening comes to a rousing climax with the best known and best loved of Sibelius' seven symphonies—Symphony No. 2 in D major—a heroic masterpiece that radiates the spirit of Finland.

For the Festival's final program, the Orchestra presents one of Mendelssohn's masterpieces, *The Hebrides* Overture. Mendelssohn wrote the opening theme for this moody and atmospheric "tone painting" on a windy day in 1829, off the coast of Scotland. This will be followed by violinist Leonidas Kavakos and the Orchestra performing Mozart's Violin Concerto No. 3 in G major, one of his masterworks. Beethoven's dynamic Fifth Symphony closes the event; a stirring orchestral musing on fate that represents the bold romantic notion of "victory through struggle," and that epitomizes the concept of the symphony like no other.

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(continued on page 34)

FINE DINING GUIDE

ARDEO—3311 Connecticut Ave., NW (202-244-6750) Modern American Cuisine. Chic with warmth in an understated neighborhood setting. Pilsner-steamed mussels, Maine Diver Scallop, seafood linguine, Chilean Sea Bass, Chesapeake Rockfish, Black Angus strip steak, and rack of lamb. Sunday Brunch, 11:00–2:30; Sunday dinner, 5:00–10:00; Mon.–Thurs., 5:30–10:30; Fri. and Sat., 5:30–11:30. Valet parking available Mon.–Sat. Casual.

BISTRO FRANÇAIS—3124 M St. NW (202-338-3830) French, fresh fish, rotisserie chicken, venison, homemade pastries. The fun place to go after hours. Brunch Sat. and Sun. with unlimited champagne. Early bird: 5–7 p.m. Late bird: 10:30 p.m.–1 a.m. Appetizers, entrees, wine, and desserts. Sun.–Thurs. 11 a.m.–3 a.m., Fri. and Sat. 11 a.m.–4 a.m., Casual.

BOMBAY CLUB—815 Connecticut Ave., NW, between H and I (202-659-3727) Finest Indian cuisine in an environment reminiscent of the old clubs of India. Specialties include Tandoori Salmon and Green Chili Chicken. Elegant cuisine enhanced by refined service and live piano music. Lunch: Mon.–Fri., 11:30–2:30; Dinner: Mon.–Thurs., 6:00–10:30, Fri. and Sat., 6:00–11:00. Sun.: Champagne Brunch, 11:30–2:30, Dinner, 5:30–9:00. Complimentary Valet Parking after 6:00 p.m.

CAFÉ LOMBARDY—2019 Pennsylvania Ave., NW (202-857-3912) Simple but elegant. Contemporary American cuisine. 3-course, pre-theater menu, 5:30–10, Sun.–Sat. Ask for our Venetian room; it's a perfect place to steal away for a candlelit supper *à deux*. Jacket. Complimentary valet parking.

CLYDE'S OF GEORGETOWN—3236 M St. NW (202-333-9180) American, grilled fresh seafood, pastas, sandwiches, main course salads, chili, burgers, Mon.—Fri. noon–midnight, Sat. and Sun. 9 a.m.–midnight. Casual.

DONATELLO—2514 L St. NW (202-333-1485) Northern Italian, fresh seafood, homemade pastas and desserts. Dinner $21.00 before 6:30 p.m. or after 10 p.m. Lunch 11:30–2:30, dinner Sun.–Thurs. 5–11:30, Fri. and Sat. 5–12:30. Complimentary valet parking after 5:30.

1409 PLAYBILL CAFÉ—1409 14th St., NW (202-265-3055) The Sardi's of D.C. Visit our wall of fame—autographs of the stars. Steps away from Studio Theatre. Sun., 5:30–11; Mon.–Thur. 6:00–11; Fri. and Sat. 6:00–midnight. Happy hour every day from 4–8 p.m. Casual.

MARSHALL'S RESTAURANT AND BAR—2524 L Street, NW (202-333-1155) A short walk from the Kennedy Center. Italian chophouse featuring seafood, steaks, homemade pasta, and the best burger in town! Sun.–Thurs. 11:30 a.m.–midnight. Open until 1:00 a.m. Fridays and Saturdays.

OLD EBBITT GRILL—675 15th St. NW (202-347-4800) American saloon food, grilled fresh seafood, homemade pastas, Maryland crab cakes, oyster bar, hearty sandwiches; open every day for breakfast, lunch, dinner, and late-night fare until 1 a.m.; Casual.

THE OVAL ROOM—800 Connecticut Ave., NW (202-463-8700) Casually Elegant Contemporary American Cuisine, Tuna and Salmon Tartar, sea bass, veal chops. Prix fixe pre-theater, three-course for $25.00 served 5:30–6:45 p.m. Intimate Dining Room. Mon.–Thurs. 5:30–10 p.m. Fri.–Sat. 5:30–10:30 p.m. Piano music Tues.–Sun. Casual. Complimentary valet parking.

701—701 Pennsylvania Ave., NW (7th St.) (202-393-0701) It all comes together at this most civilized, elegant downtown restaurant, where memorable service and imaginative fare complement the lovely spacious room. Diners fall in love with the night views from the terrace, the power buzz at lunch, and the cool green champagne bar. Prix-fixe, pre-theater, 3-course dinner for $24.50 served 5:30–6:45 p.m. Mon.–Thur. 5:30–10:30. Casual. Complimentary valet parking

1789 RESTAURANT—1226 36th St. NW (202-965-1789), seasonal American cuisine, rack of lamb, jumbo lump Maryland crab cakes, loin of venison, pre-theater menu, until 6:45 pm, $29. Mon.—Thur. 6–10 p.m., Fri. 6–11 p.m., Sat. 5:30–11 p.m., Sun 5:30–10 p.m. Jacket.

SAVEUR—2218 Wisconsin Ave., NW (202-333-5885) featuring Rack of Lamb, Bouillabaisse, and fresh seafood. Chef Daniel Zoby creates an eclectic California-French menu served in an intimate, warm setting. Enjoy your meal amidst the soothing strains of jazz music and the work of various local artists. Join us on Tuesday and Wednesday evenings for half-price bottles of wine, and be sure to check out our new Sunday Brunch. Lunch, Mon.–Fri. Dinner: Mon.–Thurs., 5:30–10:00; Fri. and Sat., 5:30–11:00; Sun., 5:00–9:00. Complimentary valet parking on Friday and Saturday evenings.

TEATRO GOLDONI—1909 K. St. NW (202-955-9494/www.teatrogoldoni.com) Master Chef Aielli is the culinary wizard in the Teatro Goldoni kitchen. He combines traditional and modern Venetian cuisine, blending simplicity with creativity to create award-winning Italian cuisine. Mon.–Fri. Lunch 11:30 a.m.– 2:30 p.m., Mon.–Thurs. Dinner 5:30–10:00; Fri. and Sat. Dinner 5:00–11:00. Prix fixe/Pre-theatre menu: three courses for $35, offered daily from 5:30–7:00. Valet parking, private dining, and live music Friday and Saturday evenings.

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(continued on page 42)

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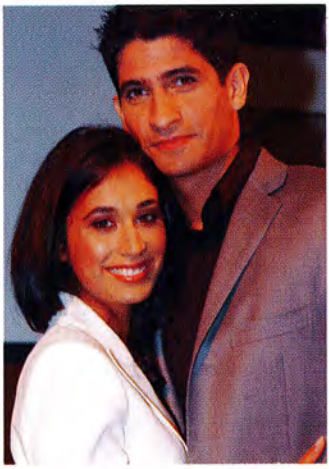
The best of the West End: shows, celebrities and theatre news

Dreams come true

BOMBAY DREAMS, THE LONG-AWAITED Bollywood musical from AR Rahman, produced by Andrew Lloyd Webber, opens this month with Preeya Kalidas and Raza Jaffrey as two star-crossed lovers. *theatregoer* provides a guide to the lavish extravaganza, from the storyline to the staging, going backstage with the cast and crew. Bombay Dreams is at the Apollo Victoria, Tel: +44 (0) 870 899 3339



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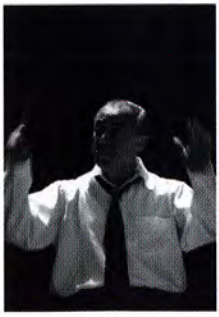

Centenary!

SHERIDAN MORLEY LOOKS BACK AT THE CAREER OF THE MOST successful composer of stage musicals in history, Richard Rodgers – who celebrates his centenary this year. The co-author of such classics as *Pal Joey*, *South Pacific* and *The Sound of Music*, Rodgers enjoyed huge commercial success in association with lyricists Larry Hart and Oscar Hammerstein, but experienced an increasingly difficult personal life.

The luck of the Irish

The Lieutenant of Inishmore, by controversial young playwright Martin McDonagh, whose first play *The Beauty Queen of Leenanne* was Tony Award-nominated, opens at the Garrick this month following its successful run at the Barbican.

Life begins at 40

Chichester Festival Theatre celebrates its 40th anniversary with a season that includes screwball comedy *The Front Page* and the dazzling musical *Cabaret*.

Front of house

Boy George takes to the stage in his own musical, *Taboo*; and Carolee Carmello replaces Marin Mazzie in *Kiss Me, Kate*.

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(continued from page 20)

Meet the Artists

Jeff Buhrman's association with GMCW began in 1986 when he joined the baritone section. Less than a year later he was tapped to direct the chorus' close harmony ensemble, Potomac Fever, a job he held for the next ten seasons. In 1989 he began an eight-year run as assistant director of the chorus, working alongside Music Director Jim Holloway. Mr. Buhrman had the honor of directing GMCW at an inauguration concert for President Clinton in 1996.

Under his direction Potomac Fever attained a wide following with its distinctive style, which was characterized by fluid phrasing and warmth of tone. During his tenure the group performed many concerts and fundraisers within the gay community. The highlight of his decade with the group came in 1997 with the release of the CD *In Our Lifetime*, followed by a European tour in which Potomac Fever sang at the opening ceremony of the European Gay and Lesbian Association of Choruses festival in Munich. PF had the distinction of being the only American group to perform at the festival.

A lifelong musician, Mr. Buhrman holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in music education and voice from Montclair State University. In addition, he studied voice with Marden Bate and conducting with David Randolph and received additional training in voice with Walter Blazer of the Manhattan School of Music. He has performed with such preeminent choral conductors as Robert Shaw, Roger Wagner, David Randolph, and Dennis Keene.

Mr. Buhrman has more than 20 years of experience as a choral director, during which time he has worked with high school choruses, community choruses, and church choirs. He founded and led a five-voice early music ensemble, Friends and Aires, in the 1980s. A devotee of musical theater, he has also directed a number of musicals, including *Bye Bye Birdie, Once Upon a Mattress,* and *Bells Are Ringing*. He has also served as musical director for many other productions, including GMCW's 2000 production of *Little Shop of Horrors*.

Mr. Buhrman has a Master of Arts degree in counseling from George Washington University. He recently retired from the field of education after serving 26 years as a choral director, administrator, and counselor.

Laura Benanti is currently appearing as Cinderella in the Broadway revival of *Into the Woods*, for which she received her second Tony Award nomination, a Drama Desk nomination, an Outer Critics' Circle Award nomination, and glowing reviews from the press. She was last seen on Broadway in *Swing!*, for which she received her first Tony nomination. Ms. Benanti began her Broadway career in 1999, at the age of 19, playing Maria in *The Sound of Music* opposite Richard Chamberlain. Peter Marks of the *New York Times* called her "a charming, silken-voiced newcomer." "It may be Richard Chamberlain...whose handsome face is on the billboards," wrote *Newsday*'s Aileen Jacobson, "but the heretofore unknown Laura Benanti is the bigger news. Unaffectedly graceful and with a bell-clear voice, she is surely a star in the making." "A voice as clear as a spring day and strong as a breeze," wrote the *New York Post*'s Donald Lyons, "bright-eyed Laura Benanti is a revelation."

Ms. Benanti has also appeared in New York as Eileen in *Wonderful Town* in the City Center Encores! production and as Julia in *Time and Again* at Manhattan Theatre Club. Her regional credits include *Man of La Mancha* at the Paper

Mill Playhouse, *Road to Hollywood* at the O'Neill Theater Center, and *The Winter's Tale* at the Williamstown Theatre Festival.

Now in its 21st season, the **Gay Men's Chorus of Washington, D.C.** (GMCW) is at the forefront of the gay and lesbian choral movement, continuing its vision to affirm the gay experience and promote a culture of diversity through musical and performance excellence.

Founded in 1981, GMCW quickly became a staple of the Washington choral music scene. Over the years, the group has performed at the Kennedy Center, the National Theatre, The Warner Theatre, Constitution Hall, the Lincoln Theatre, and Lisner Auditorium on the George Washington University campus, along with a number of venues in and around the District. In addition, GMCW has toured many of the major cities in the United States and, in 1998, three Scandinavian capitals. Last season GMCW performed at Symphony Hall in Boston and Carnegie Hall in New York City.

GMCW performs three subscription concerts annually: a holiday concert, a spring concert, and a summer concert. It also appears at a number of community events, including programs for PFLAG, Whitman-Walker Clinic, and The Human Rights Campaign. While in Scandinavia, GMCW was received by Sweden's Princess Christina to thank chorus members for singing in support of Noah's Ark, a Swedish AIDS services organization.

In addition, GMCW sponsors three small ensembles: Potomac Fever, a 12-person close-harmony group; G-Men, a song-and-dance troupe; and Rock Creek Singers, a 25-voice chamber music ensemble. The three small ensembles serve as representatives of GMCW at many community functions.

GMCW has won numerous awards, including the prestigious Mayor's Arts Award for artistic excellence in 1989 and the Washington Area Music Association's WAMMIE award in 1995 for outstanding gospel-inspirational performance (for "Live at the Lincoln"). *Pride and Joy*, GMCW's holiday music CD, was nominated for both a WAMMIE and a GLAMMA award, the latter presented by the national Gay and Lesbian Music Association. In addition, GMCW can be heard on the CDs *Singing Free*, *Let It Shine!*, and two new CDs from the group's 20th-anniversary season: *And In That Moment* and *I Dream of a Time*.

GMCW's choruses are an activity of the Federal City Performing Arts Association, a nonprofit, 501(c)(3) organization that also sponsors a chorus fundraising group called the Capital Club. Information on upcoming GMCW events can be obtained by calling (202) 338-SING or by visiting the Chorus' web site at www.gmcw.org.

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David Bielenberg, *Executive Director*

Assistant Music Director: Daniel Meyer
Principal Accompanist: Theodore Guerrant
Vocal Coach: Philip Rogerson
Accompanist: Paul Leavitt
Administrative and Business Manager: Mark Garcia-Christie
Director, Potomac Fever: Daniel Meyer
Stage Director: Jarrin Davis
Executive Producer: Barry Bugg
Stage Manager: Joe Vignali
Costumes: Gary Turner
ASL Interpreters: Silvio Menzano, Jina Lynne
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James P. Madigan III
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Bong Ryoo
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Mead Summer[SL]
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Anthony Vitelli
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Morgan Slusher[SL]
J. Kirke Smith[PF]
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Tom Tyler
Bill Ward
Barrett Whitener
Paul Winters

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Barry W. Bugg
Scott Button
Samuel S. Croft
Steven C. Haber
Tim Hammett
Brian Harradine[SL]
Michael W. Helgert
Steve Herman
Marsha Holloman
Rick Johnson
Bob Klein
Jason Kuznicki
Denvil Maggard
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Paddi McHugh
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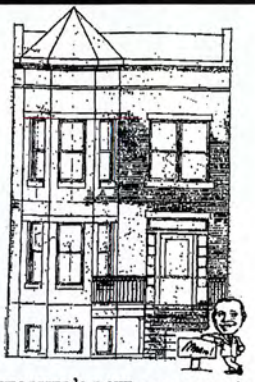

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Elton John and Tim Rice's *Aida*

July 9–August 18
Opera House

Sumptuous sets, dazzling costumes, passionate songs, and a riveting story are the hallmarks of first-class musical theater. In Disney's Tony Award–winning *Aida*, the smash hit musical from Elton John and Tim Rice—the creative team behind *The Lion King*—you'll find all of this and more. Anchored by a tale of forbidden love set against the splendor of ancient Egypt, this "big, bright, ingeniously staged show" (*Time* magazine) comes to the Kennedy Center in its first national tour. Filled with "lively melodies, catchy hooks, bittersweet ballads, and delicious harmonies" (*The New Yorker*), *Aida* is sure to be a theater experience you'll remember for years.

Merrily We Roll Along

July 12–August 24

Passion

July 19–August 23
Eisenhower Theater

The Kennedy Center's five-month Sondheim Celebration continues with brand-new productions of two of Stephen Sondheim's most fascinating musicals. *Merrily We Roll Along* tells the tale of three adult high school friends looking back on their lives as a fascinating story-in-reverse, and stars **Raul Esparza** (*Cabaret*), **Miriam Shor** (*Hedwig and the Angry Inch*), and **Michael Hayden** (*Carousel*). *Passion* explores the darker side of love and desire between a handsome soldier and his obsessive admirer, and features Tony nominees **Michael Cerveris** (*The Who's Tommy*), **Judy Kuhn** (*Les Misérables*), and **Rebecca Luker** (*Show Boat*).

Greater Tuna

July 2–14
Terrace Theater

Celebrate 20 years of comic hilarity with *Greater Tuna*, the off-Broadway sensation that returns to the Kennedy Center with the original creators and cast. In this "affectionately manic and thoroughly delightful" (*The Washington Times*) portrait of rural America, master comedians **Joe Sears** and **Jaston Williams** quick-change their way through 22 characters—men, women, children, even animals—from Tuna, the third-smallest town in Texas. From UFO sightings and overbearing talk show hosts to celebrity murders, never has one day in the Lone Star State been more sidesplittingly funny.

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