

The Quill

The Pennsylvania Shakespeare Festival Newsletter • Spring 2012

Broadway Stars to Shine at Pennsylvania Shakespeare Festival

Arriving directly from the acclaimed Broadway revival of *South Pacific* to appear in the same leading role on the PSF main stage last summer, William Michals returns in the title role in *Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street*. *Variety* proclaimed that he has “a voice that knows no boundaries”—an ideal match for Sondheim’s brilliant, tantalizing score.

With Broadway credits including *Beauty and the Beast* (the Beast and later returning to play Gaston) and the national tours of *Les Misérables* (Javert), *The Scarlet Pimpernel* (Chauvelin), and *The Music Man* (Harold Hill), Michals also brought his magic to the concert stage at PSF last summer. He will again perform a one-night-only event, *Broadway in Concert II*, on June 24.

“We’re fortunate that the same voice that has reverberated in Carnegie Hall, the Kennedy Center, and in symphony halls across the nation will once again echo in Labuda,” says Dennis Razze, associate artistic director and director of *Sweeney Todd*.

“Working at PSF was a dream last summer during *South Pacific*, and I’m really excited to be working with Dennis again,” says Michals. “I am looking forward to his guidance on this beautiful production.”

Playing Mrs. Lovett, the meat pie-making accomplice of Sweeney Todd, is Dee Roscioli—a national treasure (and local heroine) known for her long run as Elphaba in *Wicked* on Broadway and in the Chicago, San Francisco, and national touring productions of the hit musical. (She holds the distinction of having played Elphaba in more performances in various North American productions than any other actress.) A DeSales University graduate from Easton, Pa., Roscioli’s national tour credits also include the principal role of Grizabella in *Cats*.

“The typical scenario is PSF elevating the work of the best DeSales students through matchless internship opportunities at a professional theatre,” according to Producing Artistic Director Patrick Mulcahy. “In contrast, this is a case where one of our alums comes back to further elevate the already high standards at PSF. We couldn’t be prouder of Dee for achieving the pinnacle of excellence in this field: headlining a hit Broadway show. And we are even happier to have her back, this time at PSF.”

“I can’t think of a better way to start out my summer than playing Mrs. Lovett at PSF,” says Roscioli. “The possibilities with this character are limitless and I’m like a kid on Christmas Eve wondering what is going to develop with this awesome cast.” ■

See related stories on pages 6 and 8.



William Michals (top) in the PSF production of *South Pacific* last season. Photo by Lee A. Butz. Dee Roscioli as Elphaba in *Wicked* on Broadway. Photo by Joan Marcus.

Notes from the Producing Artistic Director

Mastery. Every artist endeavors to accomplish it, but how does it happen? Shakespeare did it. Sondheim, too. And Tennessee Williams. But if the art objects they created are only complete in the hearts and minds of the audience, and if the genius of these great storytellers is to come through, then success depends on a level of mastery in the delivery system—that's us.



Patrick Mulcahy

When we identified world-class work as our primary *Vision 2030* goal, we embraced the challenge. Our plan for this summer? Great artists, great plays. We've engaged actors who have proven themselves by headlining Broadway productions to play Mrs. Lovett (Dee Roscioli) and Sweeney Todd (William Michals). We've packed the cast of *The Tempest* with a PSF all-star team. I'll share more on *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, *Much Ado*, and *King John* in the next *Quill*, but we've applied the same principle in the selection of artists for those productions.

Dennis Razze will direct *Sweeney Todd* and Jim Helsinger will helm *The Tempest*—two artists who have delivered some of the best work PSF has produced. And we have assembled design teams to match their acumen. As an example, for design details like wigs, PSF has engaged Martha Ruskai, whose credits include feature film, television, theatre, and opera at the highest levels, and Tony-winner Paul Huntley, who has designed wigs for Vivien Leigh, Betty Davis, Angela Lansbury, and hundreds of Broadway productions.

Huntley is the second Tony-winner we have engaged for this season. In addition to one-night performances by Michals and Emmy-winner Wayne Turney, Victoria Clark will perform a concert featuring the sensitivity and grace that lead to her Tony Award for best leading actress in a musical for *The Light in the Piazza* and her Tony nomination for *Sister Act*.

There's nothing easy about achieving mastery and there are no guarantees. But the formula is not so complex. Great artists, great plays. We look forward to sharing them all with you. Join us!

Patrick Mulcahy

All Aboard with Jim Helsinger

A trial of survival taught this director something about himself.



Jim Helsinger

The veteran actor, director and artistic leader of the Orlando Shakespeare Theater, Jim Helsinger returns to PSF to direct *The Tempest*. Along with his inspiring vision of Shakespeare's last play (story page 3), Helsinger related a tempestuous tale from his own past.

A friend of his was given a dinghy. Being young, adventurous, and naïve, the two of them traveled up the coast of Malaysia—on a boat meant for a small lake. The ocean, he learned, requires more respect than that. Everything went horribly awry. The sail ripped. Waves tore the boat to pieces. The two men were forced to swim to shore. While paddling through dangerous currents, they were attacked by jellyfish.

"If you're not careful, nature will kill you," he reflects.

The journey bears resemblance to Prospero's own: survival has taught him a few things.

"It is the trust that we give to each other that helps us to grow," he says. "[In *The Tempest*], we ride through the storm to a place of love and redemption."

Well known to PSF audiences both as an actor and a director—and sometimes both at the same time as with *The Merry Wives of Windsor* in 2010, his directing credits at PSF include *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (2009), *The Mystery of Irma Vep* (2007), *Sleuth* (2006) and *The Imaginary Invalid* (2005).

His PSF acting credits include *Love's Labour's Lost* (Don Armado), *Twelfth Night* (2000 and 1993, Malvolio), *The School for Wives* (Arnolphe) and *Much Ado About Nothing* (1995, Dogberry). As a playwright, he is the author of *Robinson Crusoe*; *A Christmas Carol in Five Parts*; *The Trial of Joan the Maid*; *Frankenstein*; *The Modern Prometheus* and *Dracula: The Journal of Jonathan Harker* (which PSF produced in 2008). ■

Who's Who in *The Tempest*



Alan Coates, Alonso. King of Naples, he allowed Antonio to usurp the title of Duke of Milan and presumes Prospero died at sea.¹



Steven Dennis, Sebastian. Brother of Alonso, lazy and suggestive.



Call N. Wallnau, Antonio. Usurper of Prospero's title as Duke of Milan.



Brandon Meeks, Ferdinand. Son of Alonso and Prince of Naples, he falls in love with Miranda.



Wayne S. Turney, Gonzalo. Honest old councilor in King Alonso's court.



Richard B. Watson, Caliban. Savage, deformed, but eloquent slave, he is the son of the dead witch Zycorax.



Brad DePlanche, Trinculo. Witty jester, he forms a clown-like trio with Caliban and Stephano to overthrow Prospero.



Eric Hissom, Stephano. Alonso's butler, he introduces Caliban to the pleasures and pitfalls of liquor.



Kelsey Formost, Miranda. Daughter of Prospero, she falls in love with Ferdinand.



Dameka Hayes, Ariel. Spirit once enslaved to Caliban's late mother, she is liberated by Prospero.

¹Character descriptions thanks to the *Essential Shakespeare Handbook*. First American Edition, 2004.

Lost and Found: A Voyage with *The Tempest*

By James Michael Evatt, PSF intern

June 20, 2012
The Final Journal Entry

It's been a long voyage.

Tonight we arrive—the island is close enough to touch. We're lost somewhere between Australia, New Zealand, and New Guinea. The islands here are full of mystery and myth, shadow and light. The captain and director of this voyage, Jim Helsinger, has warned us: what we see on this island might change us.

Jim tells a story that has been handed down for hundreds of years. Some of us on the voyage know the story as well as we know ourselves. Others are curious; waiting quietly as the tide lowers and we approach the misty shoreline. As Jim begins to speak, it feels like we are melting into an exquisite dream world...

When we arrive on shore, we find an old man, Prospero, and his beautiful daughter, Miranda, who have been trapped on this island for many years. Prospero, once a great duke, was driven from his home by his own brother Antonio—who seized Prospero's dukedom, lands, and riches, and set him adrift at sea with the infant Miranda. Now a young maiden, Miranda has never seen a human face except her beloved father's.

A man of learning and a powerful magician, Prospero now rules the island. He is served by the island's two inhabitants: Ariel, a spirit of the air he rescued from an imprisoning tree, and the creature Caliban, the savage offspring of a witch and a devil.

While living in exile, Prospero perfects his command over the land and sea. When he learns that a fleet of nearby ships carries his brother and other enemies, Prospero creates a colossal typhoon. Antonio and the other passengers are shipwrecked on the island.

The castaways change forever the lives of both father and daughter. Miranda lays eyes on the first young man she has ever seen—the handsome Ferdinand, Prince of Naples and son of a king. They fall instantly in love. Prospero turns his attention to his brother and his betrayal.

The lord of the island has every reason to enact vengeance on his brother, who left him to die on a boat with an infant daughter, an injury now compounded by that brother's continued revelry in the betrayal. Any man would rightly strike out for justice, and Prospero has the means both natural and supernatural to exact his revenge.

Prospero must wrestle with himself to find the better angels of his nature. *The Tempest* is, at its heart, a love story and full of wonder.

... so the story goes.

I'm rapt with anticipation of experiencing this dream, of riding through the storm to a place of love and redemption, of seeing this world of fools and pageantry. Here Prospero stands, staff in hand, wielding his magic like Shakespeare, like Jim Helsinger, like artists in search of the truth.

As the journey ends and the play begins, I'm prepared to be awed, inspired. When we land on this island tonight, our lives might just be changed forever. ■

THE
Tempest

JUNE 20 - JULY 15
SCHUBERT THEATRE



Featuring **Greg Wood**
as Prospero, the rightful
Duke of Milan.

Extras:

- *Prologues*: join us for insights into the play in an informal setting. Free. Held in the theatre 45 minutes before curtain.
- Meet the actors for informal talk-backs following all Thursday performances, except previews.

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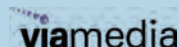
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Lee A. Butz

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The Rider-Pool Foundation Assumes Lead Sponsor Role

The Pennsylvania Shakespeare Festival is pleased to announce that The Rider-Pool Foundation is the 2012 season sponsor. The 2012 season marks the third time the foundation has supported PSF as the season sponsor; The Rider-Pool Foundation has also provided support at a variety of levels throughout PSF's 21-year history, including leadership gifts in 1998 and in 2006.

Edward F. Meehan, executive director of the foundation, noted, "The Rider-Pool Foundation's intent is to serve as a means to improve the quality of life in the community, to build on the community's strengths and add to its vitality, and to increase the capacity of the community to serve the needs of all its citizens.

"The Lehigh Valley is blessed to have a vibrant and diverse arts community consisting of outstanding visual, musical, performing, and fine arts groups. The Pennsylvania Shakespeare Festival is one of those extraordinary organizations. The Pennsylvania

Shakespeare Festival contributes to the artistic, economic, and social fabric of the Lehigh Valley."

The Rider-Pool Foundation was established in 1957 by Leonard Parker Pool and his wife Dorothy Rider Pool as a private general-purpose foundation. Upon her death in 1967, Mrs. Pool left her estate as the principal source of funding for the foundation, which generously supports initiatives and organizations throughout the Lehigh Valley.

"For those of us at The Rider-Pool Foundation, Shakespeare at DeSales has become synonymous with summer. Here is to many more years of Shakespeare at DeSales," says Meehan.

"The Festival is most grateful for the consistent and generous support of The Rider-Pool Foundation. Rider-Pool makes so much of what we do possible," says Patrick Mulcahy, PSF's producing artistic director. "They deserve a round of applause from us and from the real beneficiaries, our patrons and members of the community."



The Rider-Pool Foundation Board of Trustees. Seated: Edward Donley (left) and Denise M. Gargan. Standing, left to right: John P. Jones III, John E. McGlade, and Leon C. Holt Jr.

Put Your Company in the PSF Spotlight

The Pennsylvania Shakespeare Festival relies on sponsors big and small to produce an entire season of first-rate professional theatre.

"Performance sponsorships are a great way for companies with marketing budgets of various sizes to support PSF, entertain clients, and increase their visibility in the community and with PSF's audience," says Jo-Ann Kelly, marketing director of Clarke Systems and PSF board member.

For as little as \$1,000, a company can be recognized as the sponsor of a single performance, either one evening or one matinee performance of a play of its choice. Included in the sponsorship are four complimentary tickets to that performance to share with

family, friends, or colleagues; group rates on additional tickets; and a sign placed in the lobby indicating the company's support of that performance on that date. The company's name is added to the curtain speech that day, and the announcer will recognize the presence of the company's representatives.

"Having a world-class theatre experience virtually in our backyard is a tremendous source of pride for our law firm. We often take the opportunity to share the experience

with clients, both local and from outside the Lehigh Valley, to build relationships and entertain. They always enjoy the consistently fine entertainment that the Pennsylvania Shakespeare Festival provides," says Doug Smillie, PSF board member and attorney at Fitzpatrick Lentz & Bubba, P.C.

To learn more about performance sponsorships, please contact Deb Walter, director of development, at 610.282.WILL [9455], ext. 6, or debra.walter@pashakespeare.org.

For information on how you can put your company in the PSF spotlight, contact Debra.Walter@pashakespeare.org

Appreciated Stock Makes a Great Gift

Making gifts of appreciated assets to the Pennsylvania Shakespeare Festival often offers tax advantages to the donor.

"A donor can avoid the capital gains tax on sales of appreciated stock or real estate when the asset itself is donated to PSF rather than sold by the donor," says Deb Walter, PSF's director of development. "And gifts of appreciated assets usually enable donors to make a larger gift than if they were donating cash."

"Donors are advised to check with their accountants or tax professionals," says Walter. "Many people have appreciated stock and if they want to support PSF, a gift of stock rather than cash makes a lot of sense."

With questions, contact Deb Walter at debra.walter@pashakespeare.org, or call 610.282.WILL (9455), ext. 6.

A PROCESS BY DESIGN



Sweeney Todd

Johanna

Act 2
"Searching"
Dressed as sailor,
similar to Anthony

SWEENEY

TODD

Johanna

Hair Options

SWEENEY TODD
DEMON BARBER OF FLEET STREET.

Pirelli



Every costume tells a story. Before an actor utters a line, and often before an actor is even cast, a costume is evolving. For PSF costume designer Lisa Zinni, the design process begins with an “inspiration board” (left page)—a collage she creates from her research.

Preliminary pencil sketches [center, shadow behind color rendering] follow the inspiration boards. Final renderings feature color ideas and fabric swatches [see images labeled “Johanna” and “Pirelli,” left, and “Mrs. Lovett,” this page]. Zinni rendered costumes for the entire ensemble of *Sweeney Todd*—a cast of 24.

“Although the play is set in 1830s London, we considered the period as a place to start and mix in pieces as late as the 1890s,” says Zinni. “We have a general period look, but we’ve taken some liberties.”

Zinni’s designs for PSF over the past 15 years include *Antony and Cleopatra* (2009), *My Fair Lady* (2006) and *Amadeus* (2007). She will also design PSF’s production of *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* this summer. She served as associate designer for the Broadway company of *Rent* for its 12-year run and for many of its international companies. A graduate of DeSales University, Zinni was assistant costume designer for the 2009 Broadway hit revival of *Hair*.

By Lisa Higgins

SWEENEY TODD



SWEENEY TODD: A MUSICAL THRILLER

How Stephen Sondheim Built a Broadway Hit

By Marc Bitler

Combining elements of Dickensian London, folk tales, Victorian operetta, contemporary musical theatre, and ancient Greek plays, Stephen Sondheim created an extraordinary tour de force in *Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street*.

When *Sweeney Todd* premiered in 1979, Broadway was changing. Neither Rodgers and Hammerstein nor Lerner and Loewe had created a new work for Broadway in decades and a new generation of mold-breaking musicals featured rock and contemporary music and non-linear plot lines. The stage was set for something unprecedented.

Already recognized as a master composer and lyricist for his work on *West Side Story*, *Gypsy*, *Company*, and *A Little Night Music*, Sondheim brought his magic to the tale of an English folk character, Sweeney Todd. Based on 19th century Victorian serials known as penny dreadfuls, *Sweeney Todd* was adapted into a play by Christopher Bond and produced in London

JUNE 13 - JULY 1
MAIN STAGE

in 1973. In his recent memoir, *Finishing the Hat*, Sondheim noted that the story was played as a comedy with a few pub songs interjected.

Musically, Sondheim was inspired to do much more. There is a raucous, traditional pub song, "Worst Pies in London," and a sweeping range of musical styles and genres—from opera and classical music to English music hall, melodrama, and horror film music. Movie music, especially romantic melodramas and suspense thrillers such as *Casablanca* and Hitchcock's films, resonated from Sondheim's childhood: "Movies in which the music was as important to the storytelling as the actors were."

"A real delight in the score is Sondheim's use of musical ideas, phrases, or motives to represent characters or events," says John Bell, head of the Division of Performing

Arts at DeSales University and nationally known Sondheim scholar. "Throughout the score, either directly in melodies or more obscurely hidden in accompaniment patterns, Sondheim sprinkles these motives to, if even only unconsciously, advance the plot and the inner workings of the characters.

"And the really delicious thing about his score for *Sweeney* is that, much like the puzzle fiend he is, the secret revelation in the story is built into the score," says Bell. "The really astute listener can catch the revelation of the secret before the characters reveal it in dialogue just by listening carefully to the music.

"Sondheim moves through operatic structures such as the use of choruses, recitative, aria-like solos, and the range of both comedy and tragedy weaves throughout the piece," Bell says.

With the culmination of all these different music genres and theatrical styles in *Sweeney Todd*, Sondheim couldn't easily categorize the work. He sometimes called the piece a "dark operetta" or "a movie for the stage." However, for the published script and original cast recording, he aptly subtitled it "a musical thriller."

Director Dennis Razze, PSF associate artistic director, believes there are several similarities between Sondheim's and Shakespeare's approach to language and character. "Sondheim's characters, like Shakespeare's, have great humanity and reveal much of themselves through their precise use of language. Sondheim's lyrics are undeniably cerebral and sophisticated, so one must work hard to discover the true character, the psyche, and the mind that is capable of expressing itself in that unique way.

"Sondheim also uses music to great effect to underscore the emotional state of a character much like the musicality and rhythmic structure of Shakespeare's language creates an emotional and psychological framework for his characters."

The character of Sweeney Todd carries a bottomless grudge and a razor's edge focus. "He once was a good man, a doting father, and husband, before all these hor-

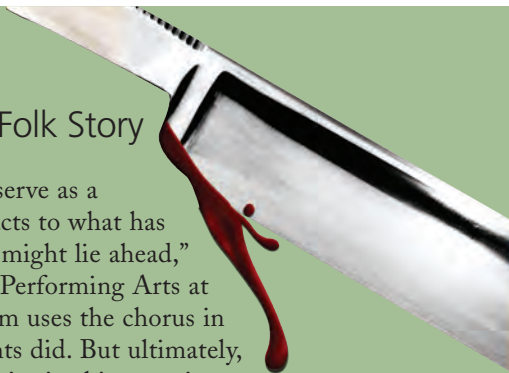
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In the Wings: The Greek Chorus in a London Folk Story

Greek playwrights used the chorus to serve as a communal voice, the conscience "which reacts to what has taken place and perhaps foreshadows what might lie ahead," says John Bell, the head of the Division of Performing Arts at DeSales University. "In one sense, Sondheim uses the chorus in *Sweeney Todd* much as the Greek playwrights did. But ultimately, the larger purpose of the chorus for Sondheim in this story is musical.

"Sondheim has said that the way to really scare people in the theatre is to provide constant music. In *Sweeney*, the conductor's baton rarely is at rest. This is Sondheim's attempt to make the audience forget they're in a theatre and to help build suspense," says Bell. "Not only is there a lot of singing, but there's also a lot of underscoring. And the chorus is a big part of that. They facilitate transitions from scene to scene to help shape the emotional pulse from moment to moment.

"Sometimes the chorus is used to soothe, sometimes they startle, sometimes they warn, etc. And of course, the larger purpose of the chorus is to give the entire work its musical thread. The chorus anchors 'The Ballad of Sweeney Todd' which not only bookends the story—serving as its prologue and epilogue—but the snippets and variations of that song become, much like in opera, a leitmotif that serves as the musical signature for the tale."



rible things,” says William Michals, who returns to PSF to play the title character. “In a role like this, Sweeney is exploring the depths of depravity. He was put through his own meat grinder, and comes out anything but a good man.”

Although this production marks the second time Razze is directing *Sweeney Todd*, he notes, “The first time I directed the show in 1997, the concept was very influenced by the original Hal Prince production of 1979, as most early re-stagings of the musical were. As is often the case, the original production really put a definite stamp on the way the show was performed.

“Times have changed. For this production, the designers and I are going for a visual

concept that is far more suggestive and less representational. I also think this time around, the show will be a bit more interactive with the audience with characters entering or exiting through the audience. The costumes will be darkly Victorian and Dickensian but have a modern edge to them as well.” (See “A Process by Design” on page 6.)

Thirty years since its Broadway debut, *Sweeney Todd* has become a classic, one of Sondheim’s most famous works, “which proves,” he says in his memoir, “that if you give an audience a good story, especially an extravagant one, they’ll accept it with pleasure.” ■

Marc Bitler is a junior theatre major from Reading, Pa.

“Sondheim also uses music to great effect to underscore the emotional state of a character much like the musicality and rhythmic structure of Shakespeare’s language creates an emotional and psychological framework for his characters.”

– Dennis Razze, director

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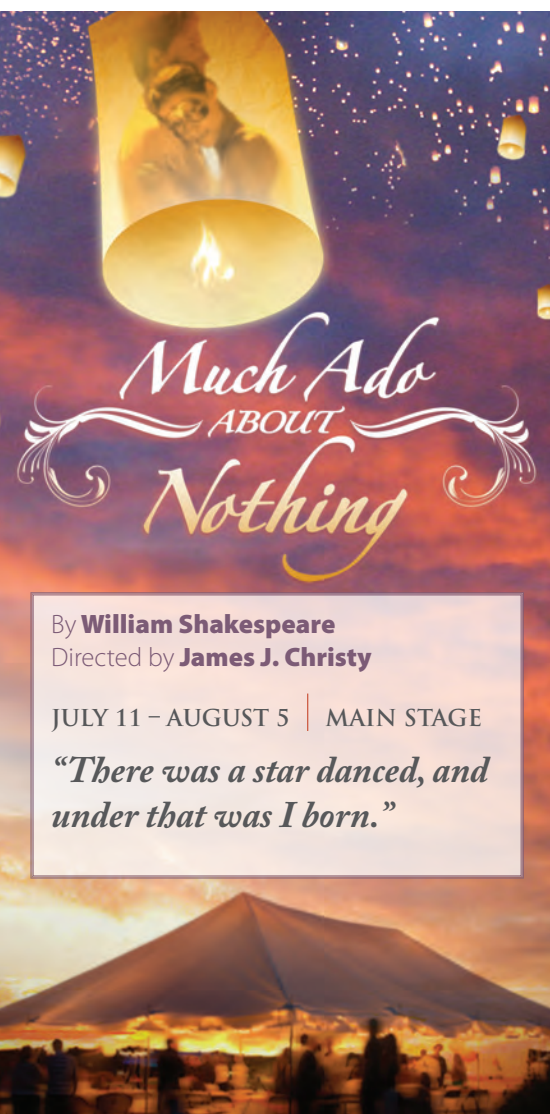
FR. GERARD J. SCHUBERT, OSFS
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Laura Zielinski

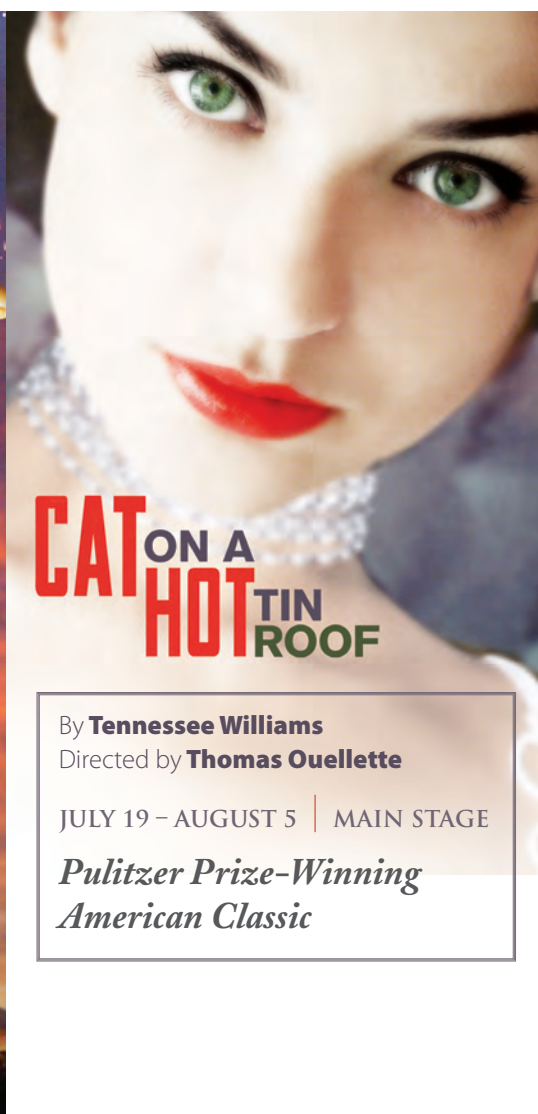
CONTRIBUTORS: Marc Bitler, James Michael Evatt, and Lisa Zinni



By **William Shakespeare**
Directed by **James J. Christy**

JULY 11 – AUGUST 5 | MAIN STAGE

“There was a star danced, and under that was I born.”

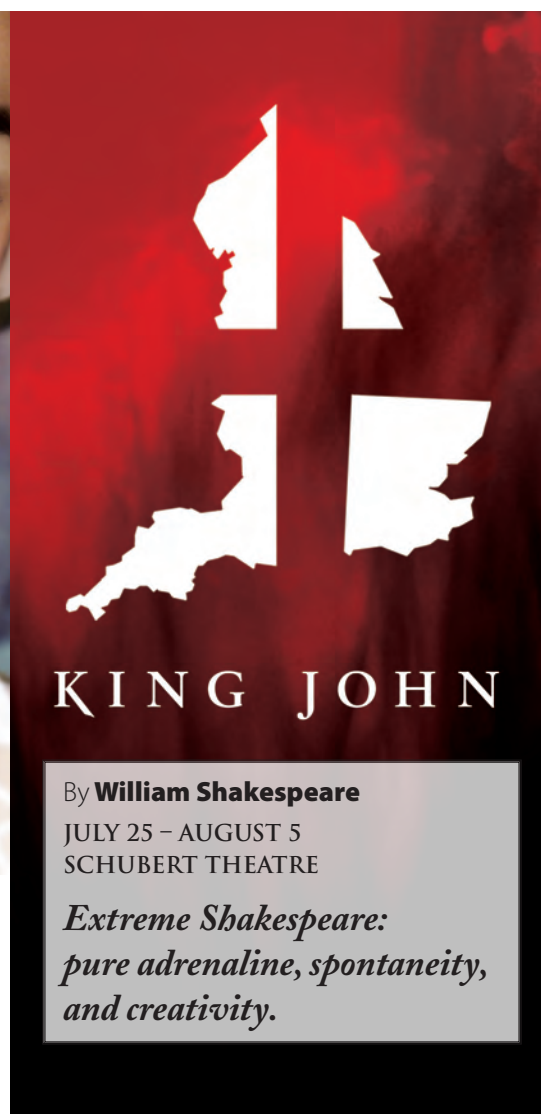


CAT ON A HOT TIN ROOF

By **Tennessee Williams**
Directed by **Thomas Ouellette**

JULY 19 – AUGUST 5 | MAIN STAGE

Pulitzer Prize-Winning American Classic



KING JOHN

By **William Shakespeare**
JULY 25 – AUGUST 5
SCHUBERT THEATRE

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pure adrenaline, spontaneity,
and creativity.*



Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs

By **Michele L. Vacca** • Directed by **Erin Hurley**
 JUNE 1 – AUGUST 4 | SCHUBERT THEATRE

Inner beauty triumphs in this engaging adaptation of the Brothers Grimm classic. The world's most delightful dwarfs welcome Snow White and help the prince vanquish the vengeful queen. **Mirror, mirror on the wall—meet the cast and have a ball!**

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PSF Welcomes New Board Members

The Pennsylvania Shakespeare Festival is pleased to welcome three new board members: Lona M. Farr, Ph.D., owner of Farr Associates Consulting, Peter J. Krajsa, chairman/CEO of First Financial Corporation, and Barry Pell, senior principal of Spillman Farmer Architects.

Farr has more than 35 years of nonprofit management experience and has been nationally recognized for her accomplishments in capital and annual campaigns, planned giving programs, volunteer management, public relations, and marketing. She was one of the first 14 individuals in the country to earn the designation Advanced Certified Fundraising Executive (ACFRE) and is the past chair of the ACFRE Certification Board. A consultant for more than 15 years, she has served in leadership positions on the staffs of DeSales University, Good Shepherd Rehabilitation Hospital, Muhlenberg College, and Diakon/The Lutheran Home at Topton, Pa.



Lona Farr, Ph.D.

Krajsa has been active in the Lehigh Valley community and with national financial services and energy efficiency organizations and has served as treasurer of the Allentown Economic Development Corporation, vice chair of the Lehigh County General Purpose Authority, board member of the Greater Lehigh Valley Chamber of Commerce, and president of the Lehigh Valley Small Business Council. He currently serves on the board and as membership chair of Brookside Country Club. He chaired the DeSales University Annual Fund in 2007.



Peter Krajsa

Pell has served on numerous boards in the Lehigh Valley including Rotary International, Central Moravian Church, and Moravian Hall Square Retirement Community. His contributions to the architectural landscape in the Lehigh Valley include ArtsQuest, Allentown Symphony Hall, The State Theatre, Just Born, Inc., and many colleges and universities.



Barry Pell

"We're pleased to have these three accomplished and community-minded individuals join the PSF board," says John Russo, president of the PSF board and general manager at Computer Aid, Inc. With the addition of Farr, Krajsa, and Pell, the PSF board totals 25. "As volunteers who support the mission of the Pennsylvania Shakespeare Festival, the board represents a diverse cross-section of the region," says Russo. ■

JUNE 2, 2012

LUMINOSITY
 PENNSYLVANIA SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL GALA

*An Evening of Elegance and Radiance
 with Entertainment from PSF Actors
 including Broadway headliners*

William Michals and Dee Roscioli

To request an invitation, 610.282.WILL, ext. 2 • psf@pashakespeare.org

Guild Volunteer Extraordinaire: Mary Bongiorno

One evening 20 years ago, Mary Bongiorno sat down to watch the Channel 39 PBS auction. The auction volunteers answering the phones that night were Pennsylvania Shakespeare Festival volunteers. At the time, PSF was just a year old, and Bongiorno had never heard of it. As the Pittsburgh native who moved to the Lehigh Valley for a technical librarian position at Air Products watched, she heard that the new theatre needed volunteers.

"I thought that would be a nice thing to get involved in," says the woman who had no experience in theatre other than seeing a play every once in a while.

Twenty years later, Mary still thinks PSF is a nice organization to be involved in. She has served on the board of the volunteer Guild, including six years as president; been a member of the Festival's board of directors; ushered and assisted tens of thousands of patrons; and given her time one afternoon a week the past several years to help out in the administrative offices.

Many summers, she's volunteered at more than 25 performances. "Sometimes, I would go in to work a little tired because I had done the show the night before. People wondered why it was so important to me, but I just loved it."

Mary grew to love the theatre so much that during one of the PSF galas, she bid up to \$2,300 for a walk-on role in one of the plays. "I was sitting at the Guild table, and at the time I was being treated for a serious illness," she remembers. "I thought, 'I want to do that,' and I just kept bidding and bidding. There was a man bidding against me, and

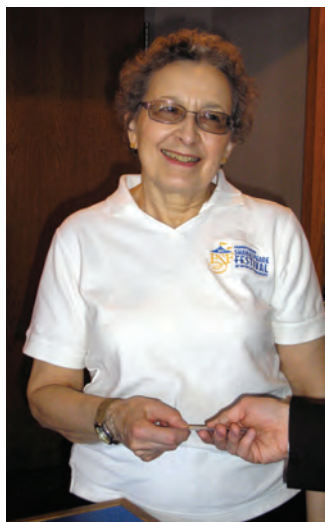
finally, Patrick (Mulcahy) said, 'Why don't we create two walk-on roles and you can each have one for the high bid of \$2,300?' We both agreed—and PSF raised quite a bit of money that night."

When she walked out on stage during *The Taming of the Shrew* later that summer, Mary wasn't a bit nervous. "The actors were so nice. Grace Goglewski—who was playing the 'Shrew' role of Kate—talked to me and included me in some of the activities back stage."

Mary also recalls that the director had called all of the actors out on stage before the performance to allow an invited audience to view some last-minute instructions to the cast. Members of the Guild were at the back of the theatre and they waved to Mary up on stage. "I waved back without thinking and realized too late, it was something I wasn't supposed to do."

She loved the experience enough to bid again for a walk-on role the following year. "Greg Wood was saying something very serious during the play and I was supposed to look serious, but I couldn't help myself. I was so happy to be in a play with Greg Wood that I was smiling at him. Later, my family [a few of whom traveled from Pittsburgh to see her on stage] said, 'you will never be an actor.'"

Mary retired from Air Products in 2009, but she hasn't retired from PSF. "If anything, she's more involved than ever," says Tim Walling, management associate. "Mary is an invaluable member of the Guild, but more importantly, she is a dear friend that I treasure. I know I can always count on Mary for anything!" ■



Mary Bongiorno collects tickets. Photo by Marc Bitler.



Mary Bongiorno in the Green Room with Greg Wood [center] and fellow walk-on actor Paul Domalakes after a performance of *Cyrano de Bergerac* in 2008.

Dinner with Dennis & Deb

**When the curtain comes down
—or before it rises.**

**Join them for dinner
and "behind-the-scenes"
conversation.**

In conjunction with

**Sweeney Todd:
The Demon Barber of Fleet Street**

Dennis Razze

PSF Associate Artistic Director
(and *Sweeney Todd* director)

and

Deb Walter

PSF Director of Development

5:30 p.m., Sunday, June 17
DeSales University Center

Dinner only: \$34 per person
Dinner & Show: \$72 per person

You may attend the 2:00 p.m.
matinee before dinner, the
7:30 p.m. performance after, or
just join us for dinner.

Please note: If you are a subscriber, or already have tickets
to a different performance of *Sweeney Todd*, you are
welcome to exchange your tickets to either the 2:00 p.m.
or the 7:30 p.m. performance.

Call: 610.282.WILL, ext. 6 or
debra.walter@pashakespeare.org



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SUMMER 2012



Much Ado About Nothing

July 11 – August 5



Cat on a Hot Tin Roof

July 19 – August 5



The Tempest

June 20 – July 15



Sweeney Todd

The Demon Barber of Fleet Street

June 13 – July 1



King John

July 25 – August 5

Children's Shows:

Snow White & the Seven Dwarfs

June 1 – August 4

Shakespeare for Kids

July 25 – August 4

ONE NIGHT ONLY EVENTS

William Michals

Broadway in Concert II

Sunday, June 24, 7:30 p.m.

Another “enchanted evening” with William’s rich baritone and inviting presence. The Broadway and concert star played in the landmark revivals of *South Pacific* at Lincoln Center and PSF. He made his Broadway debut as The Beast in Disney’s *Beauty and the Beast*, later returning to play Gaston.



The Gospel According to Saint Mark

Monday, July 23, 7:30 p.m.

Wayne S. Turney’s performance of *The Gospel According to Saint Mark* in the elegant cadences of the King James version has enraptured audiences around the country for 20 years. Well known to PSF audiences for his turns as Mr. Bennet, Polonius, and others, Wayne breathes life into the character and words of St. Mark.



Victoria Clark

Tony Winner Live in Concert

Monday, July 30, 7:30 p.m.

Winner of the Tony, Drama Desk, and Outer Critics Circle Awards for Best Leading Actress in a Musical for her luminous portrayal of mother Margaret Johnson in the Broadway production of *The Light in the Piazza*, Victoria Clark maintains one of the most diverse performing careers of any living artist, equally at home on Broadway, in film, television, and on the concert stage.

