



A Celebration of Heroes and Humanity: *Les Misérables*

By Dennis Razze

When *Les Misérables*, produced by the Royal Shakespeare Company, premiered in London at the Barbican theatre in 1985, the reviews that came the following morning were mostly negative. Cameron Mackintosh, the producer, and Trevor Nunn, the director, were considering plans to close the show. But a call to the box office revealed that thousands were lining up to buy tickets.

Since that historic night, *Les Miz*, as it became popularly known, has been translated into 22 languages, played in 42 countries and more than 319 cities, and has been seen by 70 million people worldwide.

It was more than a year ago that I learned that I would be directing *Les Misérables* this summer for PSF. It seemed that I had waited a lifetime for the opportunity to direct this now legendary musical.

Les Miz was one of those “sung through” musicals that had blazed a new path for the musical theatre back in the 1970s and ’80s. *Les Miz*, *Jesus Christ Superstar*, *Evita*, *Sweeney Todd*, and *The Phantom of the Opera* were all hugely successful experiments at combining opera form with the popular sound and energy of the musical theatre.

When I saw the Broadway production as a young man, I did not immediately succumb to the power of *Les Miz*. (The same was true for me of *Evita*.) Like many, I had grown up in the Rodgers and Hammerstein school of musical theatre, which was story-driven and had at its core a theatrical play enhanced by song and dance. These “sung-through” musicals were more akin to pop operas and were something entirely different. They filled the stage with a great many characters and sub-plots and portrayed a vast tapestry of political and social upheaval. Their scores were often more like pop music

than the musical theatre scores to which I was accustomed. Over time, I came to appreciate *Les Misérables*, its powerful and poignant story, and the intricacies and beauty of its lyrics and score.

The inspiration for the musical, Victor Hugo’s novel *Les Misérables* published in 1862, is considered both a masterpiece of the Romantic Movement and one of the greatest novels ever written. An epic work of nearly 1,500 pages, the novel is not romantic in the sense of romantic love, but portrays the passionate rebellion of people that have been repressed by unjust governments and kept under heel by a callous ruling class.

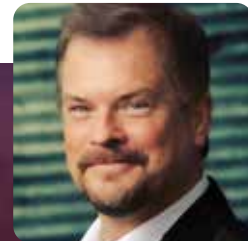
Romantic stories often center on the noble struggles of a romantic hero, usually a

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Les Misérables: Another Stellar PSF Cast

Collectively, the cast director Dennis Razze has assembled for *Les Misérables* has the most Broadway credits, most recording artists, and most national tours of any cast ever on stage at PSF.

“The sweeping range of the music and the story of *Les Miz* demands exceptional singer-actors, and this cast has the experience on some of the world’s best stages to give our audiences an unforgettable evening of live theatre,” says Razze.



Mike Eldred: Jean Valjean

Played Jean Valjean on Broadway and other theatres; Internationally known tenor; recording artist



Jeremiah James: Javert

Played Billy Bigelow in *Carousel* in the West End and El Gallo in *The Fantasticks* in NYC; recording artist



Rachel Potter: Eponine

Played Wednesday on Broadway in *The Addams Family*; Top 12 Finalist on Fox TV’s *The X Factor* (Season 3); recording artist



Kate Fahrner: Fantine

Glinda in *Wicked* (Broadway, Nat’l Tour, Chicago); Nellie in Lincoln Center’s National Tour of *South Pacific*



Brad Greer: Marius

Riverside Theatre/ National Tour of *Altar Boyz*; Walnut Street (Phila.) production of *Grease*



Delaney Westfall: Cosette

Just finished *Side Show* on Broadway (multiple roles); principle roles in several full-length HBO movies



Jon Berry: Enjolras

Co-star in hit TV shows *Nashville* and *Drop Dead Diva*



Tim Gulan: Thénardier

Broadway: *The Last Ship*, *The Lion King*, others National Tours: *Les Miz* (Thénardier, 25th Anniversary tour), *South Pacific* (Billis)

Notes from the Producing Artistic Director

Spring is always exciting at the Festival—we cast all the actors, complete designs with directors and designers, and prepare Prologues, our gala, and our many enrichment events—we share our visions for a delightful and enriching summer and you make your plans to join us.



Patrick Mulcahy

And yet there is something special about the way this particular season is coming together. There is an energy to it...

The cast for *Les Misérables* is superb and includes actors who have played these and other roles on Broadway and in national tours, actors with recording careers and successful seasons on *The X-Factor*. *Les Miz* will be the best-attended theatre production in the history of the Lehigh Valley and it will sell out.

Around the World in 80 Days will feature most of the creative team from our sold-out 2005 production, including the terrific director and designers and some of your favorite actors in that cast, along with enough new blood to fuel Fogg and his fellow travelers on their journey!

Who else would you want to direct one of the greatest American comedies, *The Foreigner*, other than Jim Helsinger, especially on the heels of *Lend Me a Tenor* last season? That cast is another all-star team that will also cross over in rep to “the brightest heaven of invention” in Shakespeare’s masterful *Henry V* and the original band of brothers.

And again we have packed our actor-driven Shakespeare production—this year the exotic adventure tale *Pericles*—with our finest, just as Shakespeare would have done.

You can see this remarkable collection of plays and players—150 performances in all to choose from—all in an eight-week span, and all right here at PSF. Where else?

Come make some life memories with us. We’ll be ready for you.

Patrick Mulcahy

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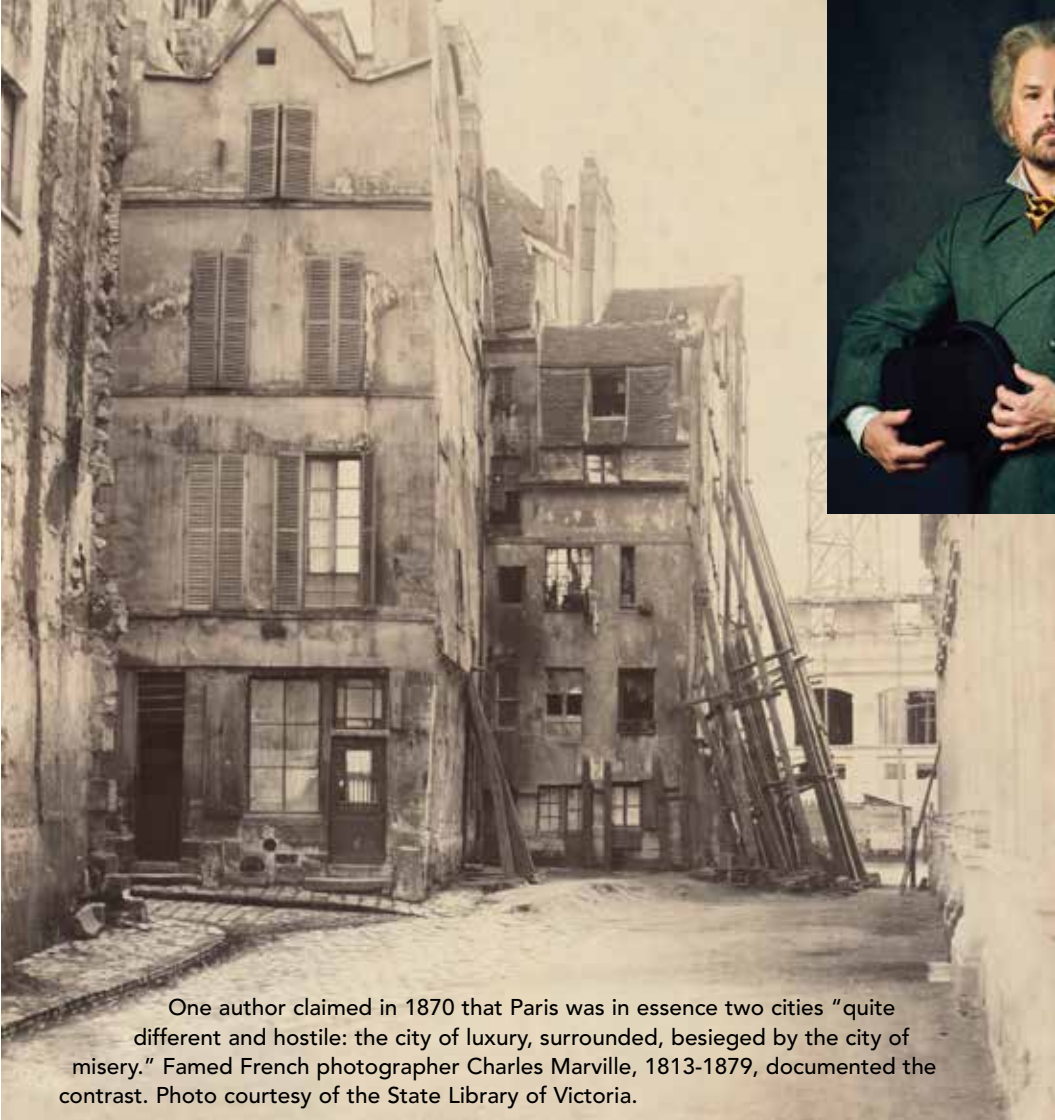
LUMINOSITY



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One author claimed in 1870 that Paris was in essence two cities "quite different and hostile: the city of luxury, surrounded, besieged by the city of misery." Famed French photographer Charles Marville, 1813-1879, documented the contrast. Photo courtesy of the State Library of Victoria.



Mike Eldred portrayed John Valjean on Broadway in addition to playing the role last year at Studio Tenn in Nashville. Photo by Anthony Matula.

Les Miz *continued*

common, ordinary man who fights injustice and gives voice to those for whom life has been unjust and unkind. Cyrano, William Tell, Robin Hood, and yes, Victor Hugo's leading character Jean Valjean, are all great examples of a hero who stands up against tyranny and injustice and provides courageous example to those too miserable and downtrodden to fight for themselves.

Jean Valjean is a particularly poignant example as he himself is transformed by faith to cast off the bitter and violent person he became after he was imprisoned for stealing a loaf of bread to feed his sister's children. Through God's compassion, demonstrated to him by an old country bishop, he transforms his life into one of service. He learns that through loving others salvation is possible: "To love another person is to see the face of God."

This famous line, like many of the lyrics of the songs in *Les Miz*, are taken directly from passages in Hugo's novel. Another is Valjean's statement, "If I speak, I am con-

demned. If I stay silent, I am damned!" Yet another passage provides the words for the show's famous anthem:

Do you hear the people sing
Lost in the valley of the night?
It is the music of a people
Who are climbing to the light.
For the wretched of the earth
There is a flame that never dies.
Even the darkest night will end
And the sun will rise.

Producing and directing *Les Miz* is an epic undertaking in its own right. It took seven years for PSF to receive the rights to produce it. The production is by far the most expensive the company has ever done. As the director, my preparation began by listening to every recording of *Les Miz* there was, viewing the many concert videos, and traveling as far as Orlando to see recent productions and of course, to scout talent.

I saw a record number of auditions for this production—more than I ever have for a single show, easily more than 500, and

viewed many more via videos. I spent hours researching the period, Victor Hugo and the novel, and searching for visual research to inspire the look of our production.

Steve TenEyck, the scenic designer who I collaborated with on PSF's *Sweeney Todd*, found photographs of Paris from this period taken by Charles Marville showing that Paris was in the process of being torn apart, transforming from its medieval character to the beginning of the Paris of the late 19th century. The poor were certainly miserable at this time, living in squalor in collapsing, crumbling buildings and streets, crammed too closely together, conditions that created a hotbed for yet another revolution in French history.

Steve and I have literally re-designed the set for the show three times and with each new version we improved upon the look and feel of the production. Lisa Zinni, our talented costume designer, has been scouring racks of clothes and creating wonderful new designs to bring each character to life and to create a world that feels "lived in" and real.

I hope you will join us this summer for this epic musical experience. It will be the first professional production of *Les Misérables* in the Lehigh Valley and we have assembled an extraordinary company of actors and singers, orchestra, and artisans who will lend their talents to making this dream a reality. ■

PSF presents a new production of
Boublil and Schönberg's

Les Misérables

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Around the World in 80 Days: BYOB

By Mark Brown

If you walk straight out the front entrance of the Labuda Center for the Performing Arts and go to where the sidewalk meets the road, you'll be standing at the very spot where my play *Around the World in 80 Days* was born. There should be some sort of plaque there. At least that's what my mom thinks. I'd rather there be a Starbucks cart.

I was working that summer (1999) at the Pennsylvania Shakespeare Festival—one of three actors in *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (Abridged)*, directed by Jim Helsing. (Which, by the way, was tremendously fun to do.)

I was standing there at the corner of sidewalk and road with Jim and Michael Carlton. The three of us had a history of brainstorming what books would make good stage adaptations. And *Around the World in 80 Days* came up. I believe it was Michael who said, "Mark, you write it. I'll direct it at Jim's theatre (Orlando Shakespeare Theater).

I said, "Okay." And that was it. No great story about how it happened. I'm not a lifelong Jules Verne fanatic. I haven't memorized every one of his novels...in French. I didn't spend my childhood trying to dig to the center of the Earth. Or go to Jules Verne conventions dressed as Captain Nemo. Or decorate my bedroom to look just like Nemo's submarine, the Nautilus. If I said anything like that I'd be lying.

Let me tell you right here and now, there isn't a balloon in the show. I'm sorry to break that news to you. There isn't balloon in the book. There isn't a balloon in my script. It's the curse of the movie, really. The first one. The one with David Niven. It won five Academy

Awards. The film had a balloon. It's what everyone remembers. But there's no balloon in the book and there's no balloon in this show. So if you're coming to see the show—and I hope you come many times—you won't see a balloon. Please don't be disappointed, get out of your seat in a huff, and demand your money back. If you must have a balloon, bring your own. BYOB.

My first draft of the script was nearly as long as Fogg's journey around the world. (Oh, I should probably note here that it's Phileas Fogg. Not Phineas. Almost everyone thinks it's Phineas. It's not. It's Phileas. I don't know why people think that. But they do.) That first draft was so long I was almost forced to put in a dinner break and serve food from around the world.

Which brings me to the first bit of historical information. In 1872, the year this play takes place and the year Verne wrote the novel, the first diner was started in Providence, Rhode Island.

I note this not only because you can order almost anything in the world to eat in a diner, but also because I grew up across the mighty Delaware River in New Jersey. The Garden State, my eye. It should be renamed the Diner State. New Jersey has more diners than any other state in the union (and in the world, for that matter) and is sometimes referred to as the Diner Capital of the World.

Also, the first baseball game was played in New Jersey, as was the first intercollegiate football game. New Jersey also has a Trash Museum, a Spoon Museum, and the State Shell is the Knobbled-Whelk...but I digress.

Through a series of readings and workshops at Orlando Shakespeare Theater, I was able to get the script down to two hours. Among the many scenes I cut, I ended up cutting a very funny (at least I thought it was funny) scene with a Mormon. Although people laughed, the general consensus was that I was pok-



Anita Vasan:
Aouda, etc.



Brad DePlanche:
Passepartout, etc.



Eric Hissom:
Detective Fix, etc.



Christopher Patrick
Mullen: 17 roles!



Richard B. Watson:
Phileas Fogg



ing fun at Mormons. Okay, I was. But wait 'til you see this play. I poke fun of nearly everyone.

I mention this because I'm about to come to the second bit of historical information. In 1872, Brigham Young, Second Prophet of the Mormon Church, was arrested for bigamy. He had 25 wives. I'm undecided as to whether Young was the luckiest man for having 25 wives or the dumbest. I have one wife and I can't decide which I am. (My wife is reading over my shoulder and has just whispered, "You better say you're the luckiest or you're a dead man.") I'm the luckiest. (FYI: My wife Nicki Genovese used to be the general manager of PSF).

Speaking of strong, determined women, here's my third bit of historical information: in 1872, in defiance of the law, Susan B. Anthony voted for the first time. At the time, it was illegal for women to vote. She was arrested, went to trial, and was fined \$100. She never paid it. I also believe she originated the saying, "I'm sticking it to the man," but don't quote me on that.

I'd like to think that Susan voted for Victoria Woodhull. In 1872, Victoria Woodhull was the first woman nominated for the U.S. Presidency. Victoria, who used to perform a spiritualist act with her sister, Tennessee, advocated an eight-hour workday, graduated income tax, and profit sharing. Scandalous. She was also the first female stockbroker on Wall Street. I hear tell that Susan voted for Horace Greeley.

And now, in a desperate effort to tie all of this together, let me come back to the non-existent balloon. The balloon you won't see in this production. In 1783, a sheep, a rooster, and a duck (I know, it sounds like "walk into a bar" should follow) became the first hot-air balloon passengers in Versailles, France (France being Jules Verne's birthplace). About 90 years after that first balloon journey, Verne worked as a stockbroker (like Victoria Woodhull) until he wrote *Five Weeks in a Balloon*. (Not to be confused with the 45-day-longer journey *Around the World in Eighty Days*).

Verne's inspiration for *Around the World in Eighty Days* was most likely George Francis Train (if only his last name was Balloon), who in 1870 traveled around the world in (there are conflicting reports here) 67 or 80 days. Train was jailed on obscenity charges while defending Victoria Woodhull. The first U.S. manned hot-air balloon flight was by Jean-Pierre Blanchard, a Frenchman, in 1783. He flew from Philadelphia to Deptford Township, N.J. Deptford is also home to the fabulous Five Points Diner. And in a moment of truth-is-stranger-than-fiction, I was born in Deptford Township, and their slogan is "First Flight in America." ■

Scenic Designer Bob Phillips, who designed the 2005 set for *Around the World in 80 Days*, pictured left, is part of the creative team for PSF's 10th anniversary production this summer. A six-time Emmy Award winner for his television work, Phillips has designed more than 40 productions for PSF over the past 20 years. Photo by Lee A. Butz.

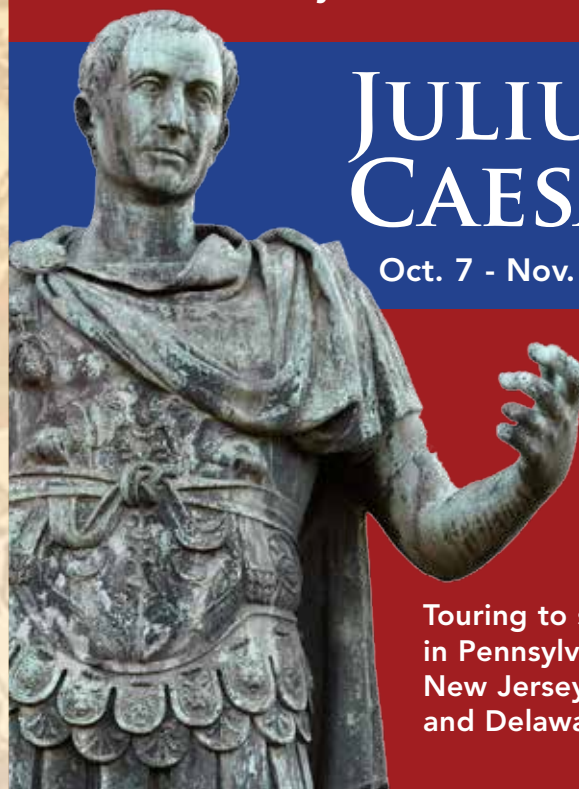
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For Kids This Summer

Rapunzel • May 29 – August 1

The Brothers Grimm classic comes to life in a new adaptation commissioned by PSF—with all the special features that make PSF's children's shows special: memorable characters, lively music, and rich costumes and scenic elements.



Shakespeare for Kids • July 22 – August 1

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The Summer Theatre Institute • July 13 – 24

In partnership with PSF, the Summer Theatre Institute at DeSales University offers advanced training and drama camps for high school and college students, as well as a junior program for grades 4 through 8. For more information, call 610.282.1100, ext. 1320, e-mail sti@desales.edu, or visit www.desales.edu/sti.



Amaranth Foundation: a Return Engagement

By Jeanne B. Shook

For Joan Miller Moran, trustee of Amaranth Foundation, “the play’s the thing.” Philanthropist, arts supporter, and Shakespeare fan, Joan has been a major player at PSF for more than a decade, having sponsored productions for many years and serving as season sponsor in 2008, through the generosity of Amaranth Foundation. Once again, the foundation will take center stage as PSF’s 2015 Season Sponsor.

Joan’s first encounter with Shakespeare was in a class at Mount Holyoke College, where she majored in English literature. Then, in a master’s program at Lehigh University, she took another Shakespeare course, and huzzah! The Bard had won her over. “How could one person put all those words together to create so many different plays?” she wondered.

She admits that reading Shakespeare can be difficult—but seeing it performed live is quite a different experience. And it doesn’t hurt to prepare: Joan has a complete set of

recordings of Shakespeare’s works. Before seeing a Shakespeare production, she and her husband Bill Fenza listen to a recording of the play, which “helps a lot with the language.” Sometimes she digs out her college book for reference and they follow along with the text.

Her advice to others: “don’t be afraid of Shakespeare.” She encourages people to attend the Festival (“you really must go,” she tells them). “People think they don’t like Shakespeare, but once they see it on stage, the characters make it believable; the stories become clearer for the audience.”

While Joan is excited about the production of *Les Misérables* that will open PSF’s 2015 summer season, she is equally enthusiastic about *Henry V* and *Pericles*, the latter of which is being performed for the first time in Festival history. “I’m always excited when they do a new one.” How exciting, then, to be the 2008 season sponsor when PSF performed *King Lear* for the first time, featuring Chris Coucill—one of her favorite PSF actors—in the title role.

While Joan readily admits that it’s the Shakespeare plays that she enjoys most, she also recognizes and appreciates the Festival’s evolution since her involvement. PSF has “blossomed” under Patrick Mulcahy’s tenure, with the introduction of repertory theatre—the same group of actors performing in two different productions—and the addition of what some refer to as “Shakespeare Untamed.” *Pericles* will be performed this way: actors arrive with their lines learned, rehearse on their own, wear what they can find, and open in a matter of days. Joan finds these freestyle versions of Shakespeare “very impressive” and “always fun.”

In addition to her many sponsorship roles and committee work, Joan donated her time and talents as a PSF board member for nine years, serving as secretary from 2008–11. After a one-year absence, she is currently serving the first term of another nine-year commitment.

Her level of dedication and support has not gone unnoticed. In 2012 at its annual Luminosity Gala, PSF honored her with



Joan Miller Moran, trustee of Amaranth Foundation, and her husband, Bill Fenza.

the Will Shakespeare Award, given each year to “a person, group, or organization that enriches the world by the sharing of gifts, inspires others through luminosity of spirit, and engages with society in a way that leaves an indelible and beautiful impression.”

According to Patrick Mulcahy, producing artistic director, “Joan is a continued source of wisdom and encouragement to me and to the Board of Directors of PSF. She has helped PSF bring people together to enrich their lives in a communal experience of inspiration and beauty through the Pennsylvania Shakespeare Festival.”

In addition to PSF, the Amaranth Foundation supports the Allentown Symphony Association, Allentown Art Museum, Bach Choir of Bethlehem, and the Wildlands Conservancy. She also sits on the Board of Overseers of the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia.

Referring to Shakespeare as “the greatest dramatist and poet of all time,” she believes that “people should know about Shakespeare. And that’s why the Festival is so important. Nobody else in the Valley is producing Shakespeare on a regular basis, and it’s important for people to be able to see it.”

“Joan’s personal interest and her understanding of Shakespeare’s universal appeal aligns beautifully with PSF’s mission,” says Mulcahy. “She cares deeply about this community and we are eternally grateful to her and Amaranth Foundation.” ■

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Longtime Children's Show Sponsors to Receive 2015 Will Shakespeare Award

Bestowed upon individuals and organizations whose contributions to the community create an indelible and beautiful impression, PSF's Will Shakespeare Award will be given to Steve and Jane Auvil at PSF's Luminosity Gala on May 30.

The Auvils have sponsored the children's show every year since 2005 and through those 10 productions and their generosity, an estimated 104,000 children and family members have experienced live theater at PSF.

"We support PSF because it provides the Lehigh Valley with outstanding productions and performances that rival, match, and, at times, surpass those we've attended on Broadway," says Steve. "Also, PSF provides a venue for members of our community, who may not be able to attend Broadway productions, to experience the wonders and richness of first-rate live theater.

"Jane and I direct our financial support to the children's show. We believe these productions provide a tremendous opportunity for children in the Lehigh Valley to experience the fun and excitement of live theater through stories they are familiar with. The hope is that the experience will stay with them and they will become avid attendees and supporters of live theater wherever life



Steve and Jane Auvil

takes them. We think of it as an excellent opportunity to help PSF plant some seeds."

And what powerful seeds those are. Study after study demonstrates a strong correlation between arts education and increased academic performance and success in life. According to a Dana Consortium study, neuroscientists found strong links between arts education and cognitive development. Children motivated in the arts develop attention and memory retrieval skills that apply to other areas.

Ben Cameron of the Doris Duke Foundation cites studies showing students working with the arts are eight times more likely to graduate from high school and show greater tolerance for ambiguity and greater interpretive skills, verbal acuity, self-awareness, and self-esteem than their non-arts peers.

One 10-year study shows that low-income students who are highly engaged in the arts are more likely to earn a college degree, obtain gainful employment, and volunteer in their communities.

PSF's Board of Directors and members of the community that have been inspired, engaged, and entertained through the Auvil's generosity will thank them on Saturday, May 30, at the DeSales University Center during Luminosity, PSF's annual gala.

"Since the Festival's inception, producing quality children's theatre has been central to our mission," says Patrick Mulcahy, producing artistic director. "We are truly grateful for Steve and Jane's generous support and for their appreciation of the importance that live theatre holds for children and families today." ■

Editor's Note: For tickets to Luminosity, contact debra.walter@pashakespeare.org or call 610.282.9455, ext. 6.

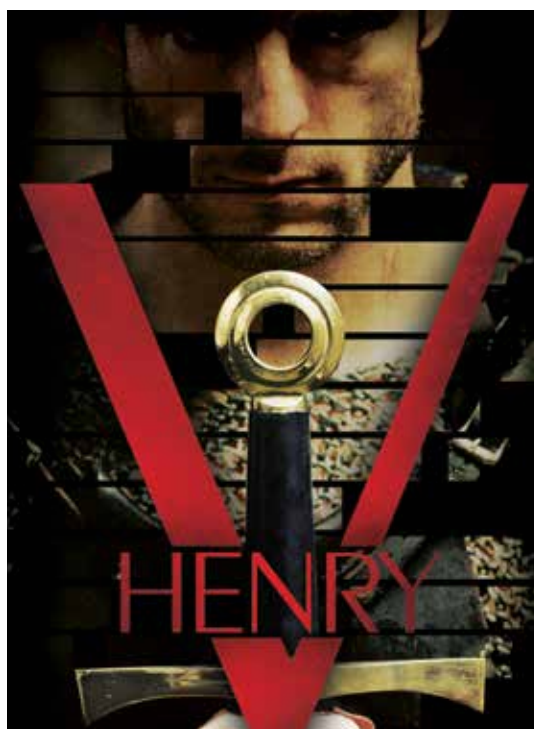


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The Rape of Lucrece

Monday, June 22, 7:30 p.m.

Schubert Theatre • \$30

In the dark of night, a violent crime is committed—and nothing will ever be the same. Dan Hodge, PSF actor and co-founder of the Philadelphia Artists' Collective, won raves in Philadelphia for his one-man interpretation of Shakespeare's epic poem *The Rape of Lucrece*, a retelling of a classic Roman myth that the Philadelphia press described as "a bravura tour de force" and "the sum of genius."



Choose Love:

Jeremiah James in Concert

Monday, July 27, 7:30 p.m.

Main Stage • \$35

From L.A. to Broadway to the West End, Jeremiah James has won sensational acclaim in theatre, TV, film, solo recordings, and as a member of the theatre super-group, Teatro. In addition to making his PSF debut as Javert in *Les Misérables*, James will perform this special concert, giving audiences here an extraordinary musical experience.



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Inspired by costumes? This season, patrons can sponsor a specific costume or costume piece. Every princess needs a trusted friend or two, and Rapunzel's spider friends come in wild colors (and a \$500 price tag).

"Patrons are often surprised that a wig can cost \$250 or more," says Deb Walter, director of development, who thought people might like to sponsor something they could actually point to on stage.

The many hats of *80 Days*? \$175. Shoes? \$50. "We have options that fit every budget," says Walter, "and you never have to worry about it adding clutter to your closet."

For more information, e-mail debra.walter@pashakespeare.org or call 610.282.9455, ext. 6.



Les Misérables costume designer Lisa Zinni created this rendering of Cosette's day dress, worn as she is wooed. Sponsoring a costume helps cover all the costs associated with its design, construction, and maintenance. A single garment can easily exceed \$1,000.