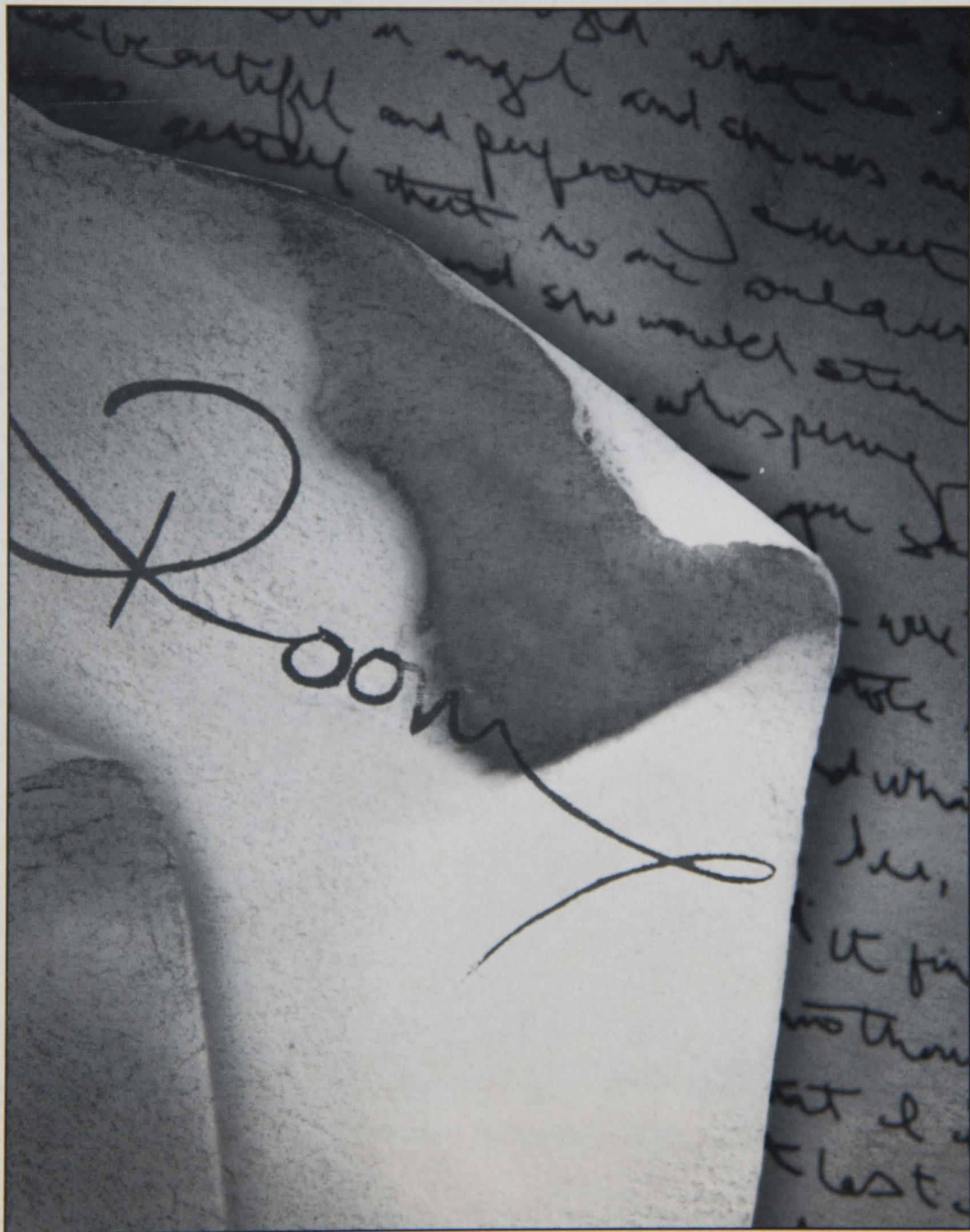


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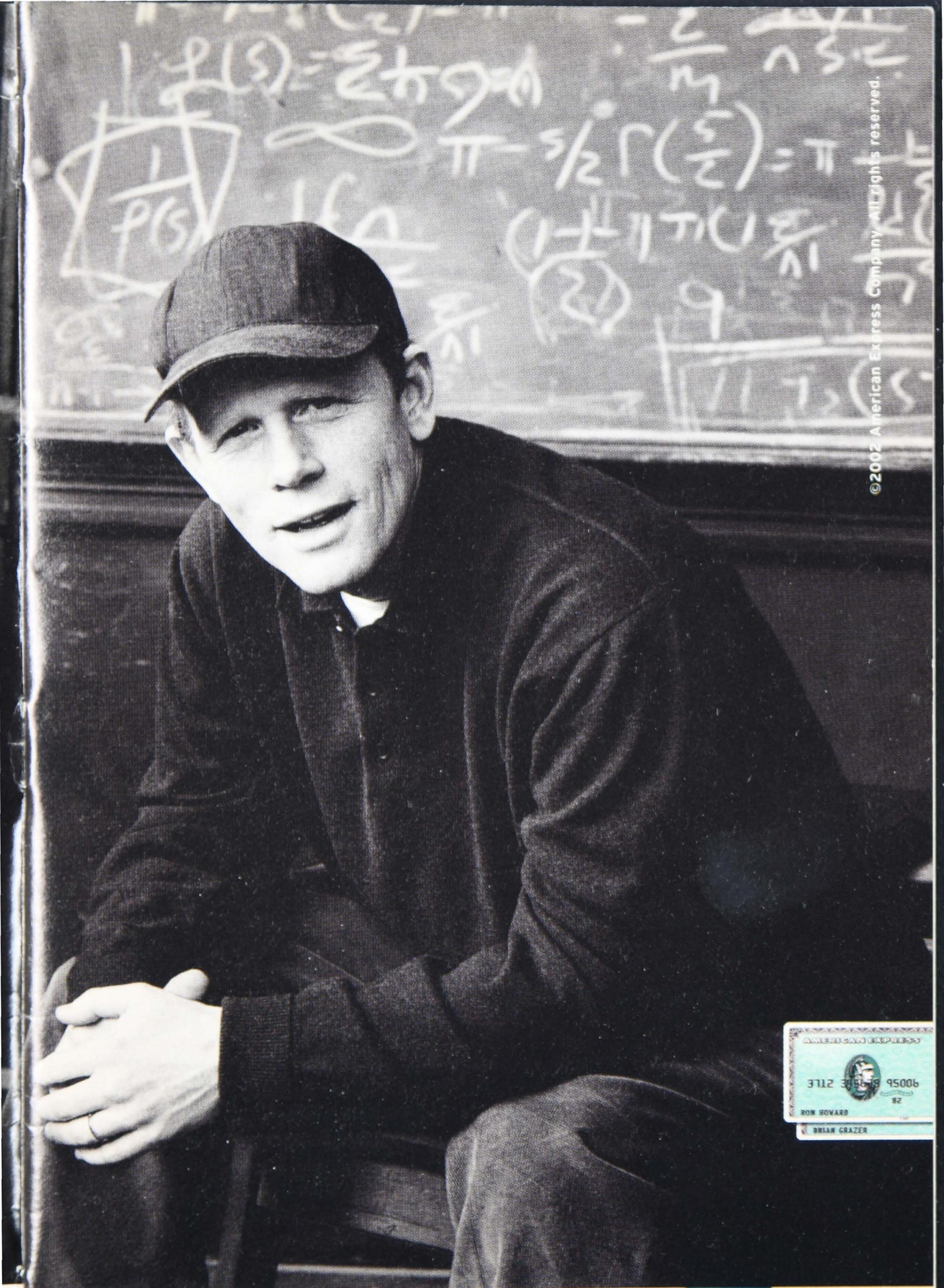


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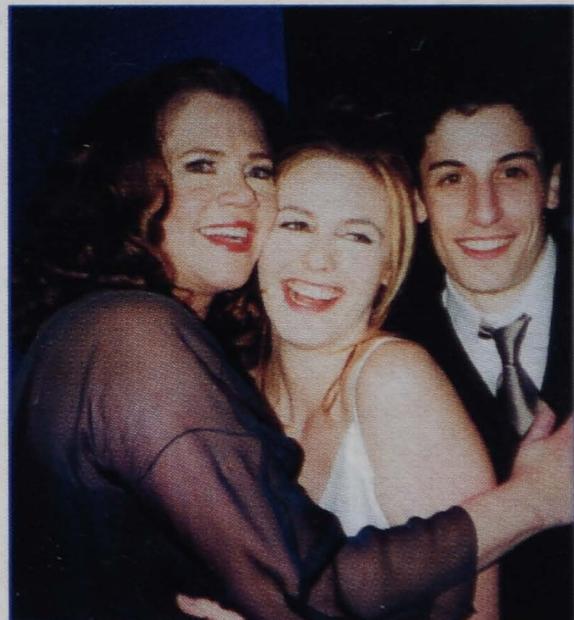
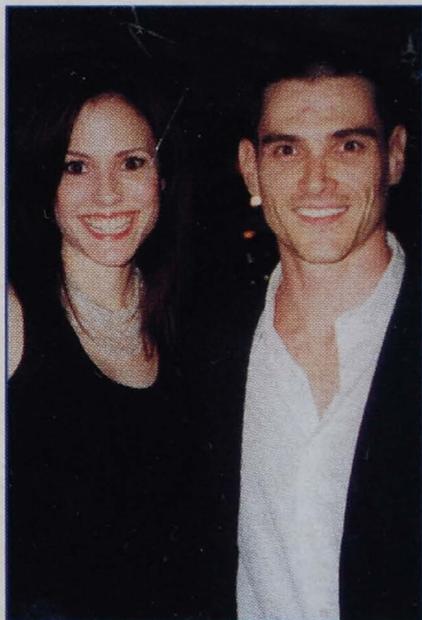
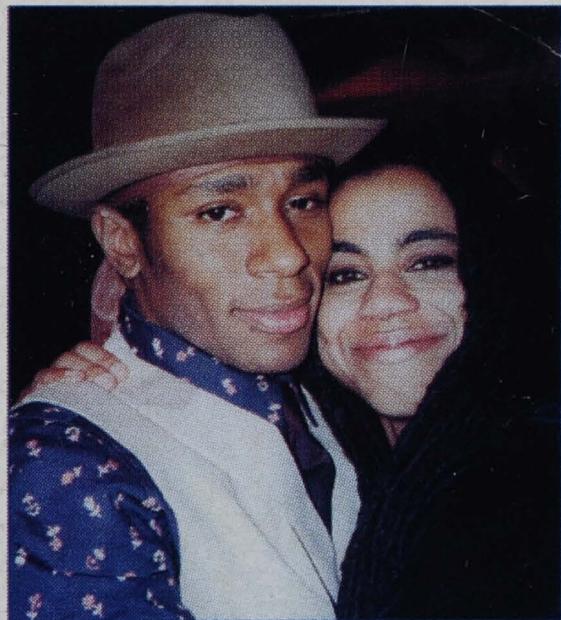
on the aisle

with Harry Haun

WAITING FOR PUFFY, ANGELS OVER B'WAY, GRADUATION DAY

The opening-night crowds at this year's final fallout of Tony hopefuls was sprinkled with unexpected stars from other galaxies, pumping new blood in Ye Olde A List. ■ The opening-night curtain for **SUZAN-LORI PARKS**'s *Topdog/Underdog*, for handy example, was held 35 minutes for **SEAN "PUFFY" COMBS**; once he

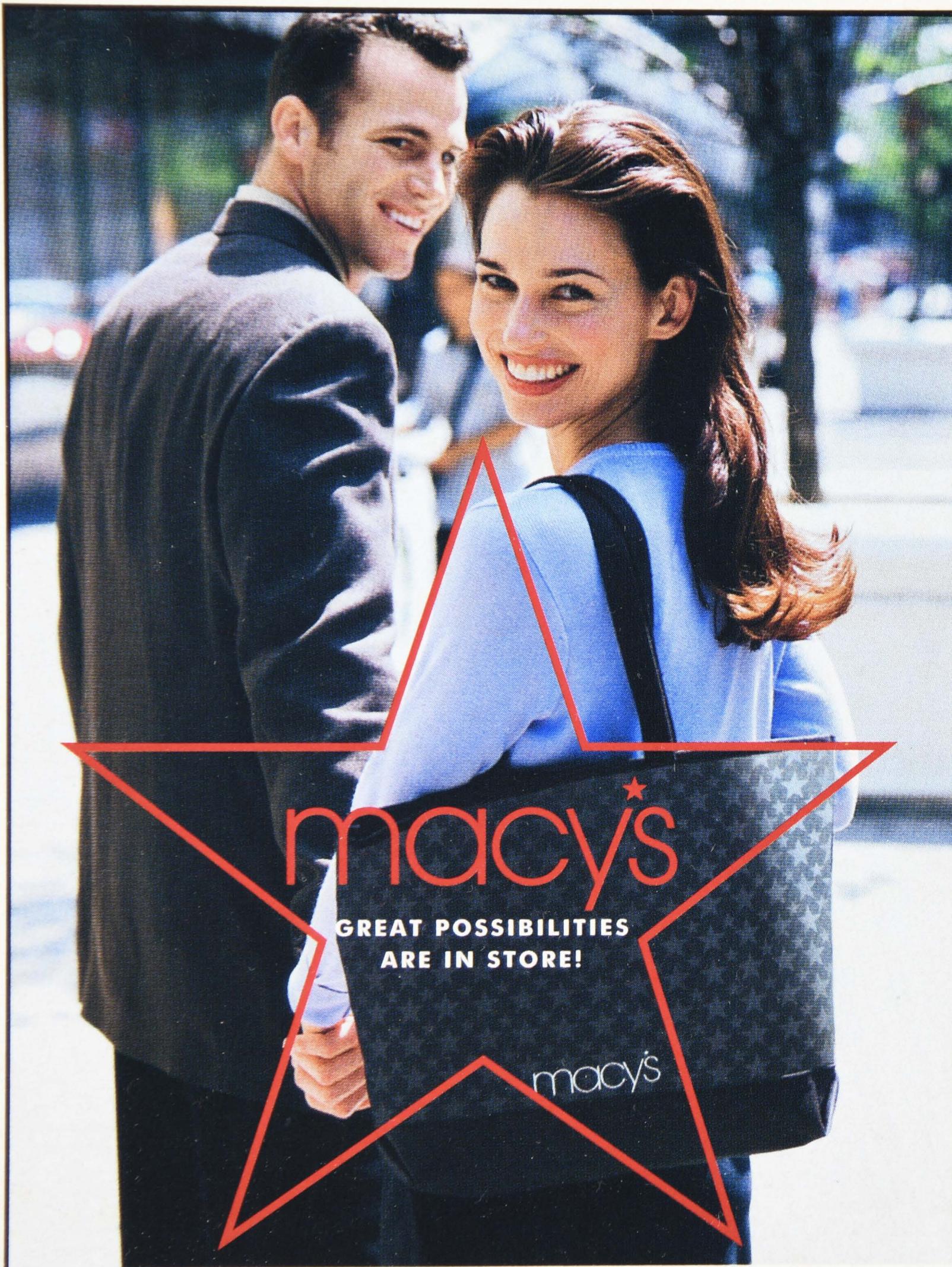
nurse attending Roy Cohn (Pacino) in *Angels*. ■ **EMMA THOMPSON**, also on the side of these *Angels* and the star of Nichols's previous HBO movie (**MARGARET EDSON**'s *Wit*), joined him and his wife, **DIANE SAWYER**, at the second Broadway coming of *The Elephant Man*. In that prestigious parade were **LAUREN**



Left: *Topdog/Underdog* co-star Mos Def gets an opening-night hug from the play's author, Suzan-Lori Parks. Center: Mary-Louise Parker and *The Elephant Man* star Billy Crudup celebrate his opening. Right (l.-r.): The *Graduate* stars Kathleen Turner, Alicia Silverstone and Jason Biggs demonstrate a group hug on their first night.

was seated, the show began. Already in their places with bright shining faces (that were starting to drop): **CHRIS ROCK**, **WESLEY SNIPES**, **SPIKE LEE**, **ROSIE PEREZ**, **JESSE L. MARTIN**, **CHRIS NOTH**. The big pre-show that preoccupied most of these during the Combs late-coming was an animated conversation the kinetic **AL PACINO** was having with director **MIKE NICHOLS**. The two are filming **TONY KUSHNER**'s Pulitzer Prize-winning *Angels in America* for HBO, and they were there to support half of the *Topdog/Underdog* cast: **JEFFREY WRIGHT**, who's reprising his Tony-winning role of a mincing male

BACALL, **DEMI MOORE**, **PATRICIA NEAL**, **IAN MCKELLEN**, **RICHARD AVEDON**, **DR. OLIVER SACKS**, **LYNN REDGRAVE** and title player **BILLY CRUDUP**'s main squeeze, **MARY-LOUISE PARKER** (another of Nichols's *Angels*). ■ There was lots of class in the class watching Nichols's Oscar-winning flick, *The Graduate*, graduate into a Broadway show: **WALTER CRONKITE**, **EDIE FALCO**, **JUDD HIRSCH**, **AMY IRVING**, **MIKE WALLACE**, **JOHN MCENROE**, **LESLIE UGGAMS**, **REGIS PHILBIN**, **TREAT WILLIAMS** and **ROSIE O'DONNELL**. How **ART GARFUNKEL** got invited to all of this I'll never know!



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JUNE 2002

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by Jerry Tallmer. Sibling scam artists are out to hustle the world in Suzan-Lori Parks's acclaimed *Topdog/Underdog*.

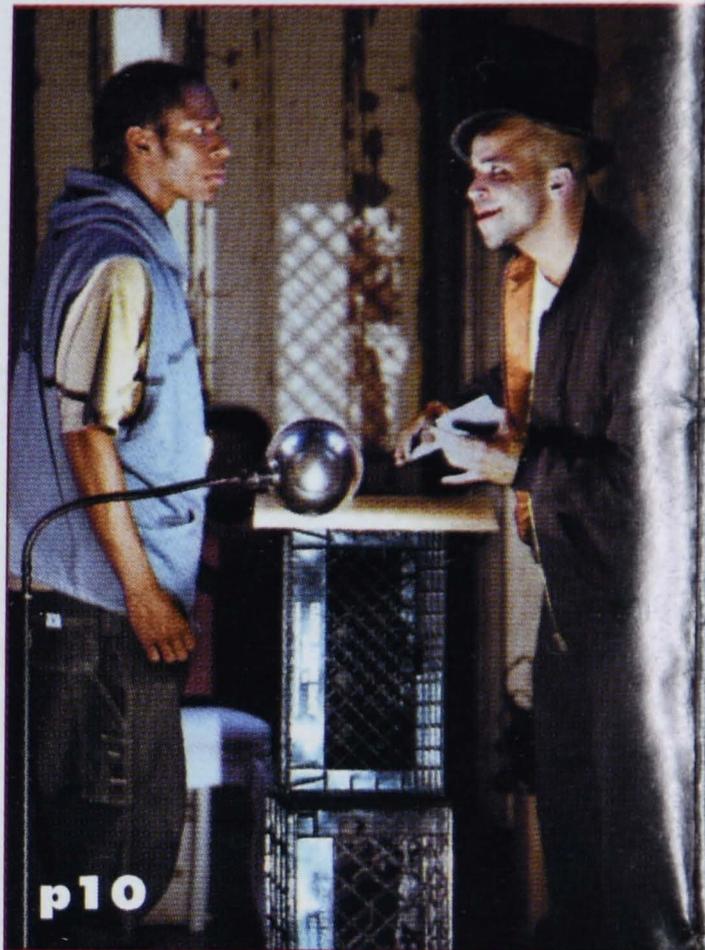
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by Harry Haun. *42nd Street's* Mary Testa and Jonathan Freeman take their comedy seriously.

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theatre quiz

by Andrew Gans

SISTER ACT The revival of *Morning's at Seven* (Lyceum Theatre) tells the story of four sisters who have spent their lives together and the feeling of unease that ensues when they begin to question how to spend their remaining years. Relationships among sisters, in fact, have provided some of the more touching theatrical moments, and photos from several productions dealing with this sibling dynamic are pictured below. Can you name them?

(l.-r.) Estelle Parsons, Elizabeth Franz, Frances Sternhagen and Piper Laurie in Paul Osborn's *Morning's at Seven* JOAN MARCUS



JOAN MARCUS

Emily Skinner (l.) and Alice Ripley starred as, respectively, Daisy and Violet in this Henry Krieger-Bill Russell musical about the life of the Hilton sisters, conjoined twins who starred in the films *Freaks* and *Chained for Life*.



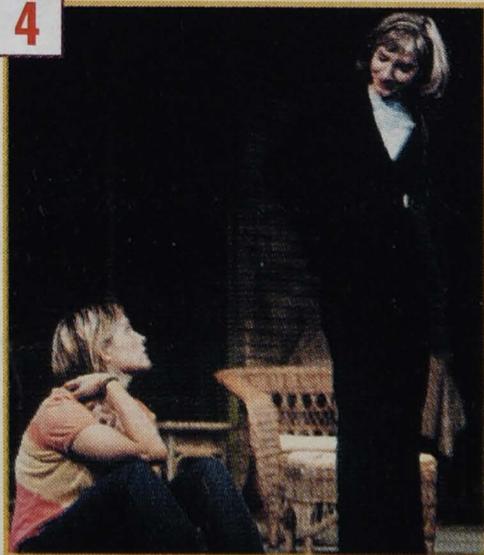
GERRY GOODSTEIN

Donna Murphy and Laura Benanti (pictured)—who is now in Broadway's *Into the Woods*—starred in the acclaimed *City Center Encores!* presentation of this musical about two sisters from Ohio who move to N.Y. to make it big, one as a writer, the other as an actress. The original Tony-winning production starred Rosalind Russell and Edith Adams.



MARTHA SWOPE

Jane Alexander (pictured) starred as a Jewish woman celebrating her 54th birthday with her two sisters—played by Frances McDormand and the late Madeline Kahn—in Wendy Wasserstein's comedy.



JOAN MARCUS

This Pulitzer Prize-winning play about the confused daughter of a mathematical genius and her relationships with her sister, her father and a prospective beau, currently stars Jennifer Jason Leigh (l.) and Seana Koefed as sisters.



T. CHARLES ERICSON

Horton Foote's newest play (at the Newhouse through June 2), which is set in post-Civil War Texas, concerns a Union soldier's three daughters—(l.-r.) Jean Stapleton, Hallie Foote and Roberta Maxwell—who strive to maintain their family unity and preserve their father's legacy.

Answers: 1 Side Show 2 Wonderful Town 3 The Sisters Rosensweig 4 Proof 5 The Carpetbagger's Children

G E O F F R E Y B E E N E

M O O D Y B L U E S





THE FULL MONTE

Suzan-Lori Parks's acclaimed *Topdog/Underdog* is a darkly comic fable of sibling scam artists out to hustle the world and each other

by Jerry Tallmer

Lincoln talks. He's letting Booth know how inept Booth is.

"First thing you learn is what is. Next thing you learn is what ain't. You don't know what is you don't know what ain't. You don't know shit . . .

"There's two parts to throwing thuh cards. Both parts are fairly complicated. Thuh moves and thuh grooves, thuh talk and thuh walk, thuh patter and thuh pitter pat, thuh flap and thuh rap: what yr doing with yr mouth and what yr doing with yr hands. Both are complicated. One dont work without thuh other. Theres guys out there who got great talk with no walk. Guys who can flap but cant rap."

"One day in, I guess, 1998," says Suzan-Lori Parks at a Broadway pre-opening celebration, "my husband and I were walking on Canal Street and saw some people doing a three-card monte scam. While we watched I heard someone talking to me in my ear, telling me what was going down. It was my husband. Until that moment I had no idea Paul knew anything about three-card monte."

It gave Parks a new approach to a play

she was thinking of writing about two brothers, black men, one of whom, Lincoln, would be all rigged up in a frock coat, top hat, whiteface and fake beard to look like his presidential namesake. Now, thanks to Ms. Parks's husband, the other, younger brother—Booth, a 30-year-old of few graces or accomplishments—would be tirelessly trying to master the three-card monte hustle in rivalry with his sibling. And the drama would be called *Topdog/Underdog*.

"Years ago," she says, "I saw that phrase in some book I was reading. I wrote it on a piece of paper and stuck it on a wall—good idea for a play someday—you know how writers are. Lincoln and Booth? Oh, that just came to me as a joke. Where does it all come from? I dunno. One of those gifts from God. You have an idea; and before you know it, a play; and before you know it, a reading; and before you know it, a production; and before

Above: Mos Def (l.) and Jeffrey Wright as brothers Booth and Lincoln in a scene from *Topdog/Underdog*

PHOTO: MICHAL DANIEL

"I love writing!" says the recent Pulitzer Prize winner. "I love writing anything."

you know it you're on Broadway! That's the fast-forward version."

Well, yes, but you don't, just like that, get to write four volumes of plays, a fistful of screenplays, some teleplays, a libretto, a novel-in-progress, collect two Obie Awards, be on the receiving end of a \$500,000 MacArthur Genius Grant *and*—the week *Topdog/Underdog* opens—become the first African-American woman ever to receive the Pulitzer Prize in Drama.

Topdog/Underdog started out in life back in 1994 as *The America Play*, about a man who left his wife and child to pursue a career he'd thought up for himself as an Abraham Lincoln impersonator. *The America Play* was produced and directed at the Joseph Papp Public Theater by the same George C. Wolfe who staged *Topdog/Underdog* there this past summer and has now remounted it on Broadway, at the Ambassador Theatre, with Jeffrey Wright as Lincoln and Mos Def as Booth. "It's the fourth play we've done with Suzan-Lori over the years. She writes and we read," says Wolfe, "and we start the journey with her."

The journey to Broadway was nurtured by *Topdog/Underdog*'s producers, Carole Shorenstein Hays, Waxman Williams Entertainment, Bob Boyett, Freddy DeMann, Susan Dietz/Ina Meibach, Scott E. Nederlander and Ira Pittelman. A big hit downtown—"We extended it as long as we could," says Wolfe—it was supposed to go into rehearsals for the Ambassador in October, but then September 11 happened.

At the little pre-opening celebration of *Topdog/Underdog*, Elizabeth Williams (of Waxman Williams) proposes a toast to "a remarkable young playwright." The remarkable playwright leaps to her feet with a gleeful whoop of "Young!" Two beats. "There's a rumor going around that I'm 31." Can that rumor be nailed down? A just as gleeful withering look declares: fat chance.

Parks, born at Fort Knox, Kentucky, is the daughter of Donald Parks, Colonel (ret.) USA, who later taught at the University of Vermont, and Francis McMillan Parks, a professor of African-American history at

Syracuse University and administrator of SOS, the Students' Offering Service. Their Army brat daughter came out of Holyoke College with a BA in English and German in 1985. She could at first glance still be in school there, this loose-limbed livewire lovely, a sophomore or junior in creative writing class under guest professor James Baldwin.

"Holyoke!" she exclaims. "Wendy Wasserstein's school! It's great! I mean, wow! We're covering the waterfront and we're both from Mt. Holyoke, and it's cool."

You'd better believe it when she says she "was very animated" reading her short stories to James Baldwin; he suggested she try a play. "I love writing!" she exclaims, here in a private moment at the *Topdog/Underdog* party. "I love writing *anything*."

She also loves Paul Oscher, the blues musician who "was the first white guy to play with Muddy Waters full-time," and who was sitting in a club in Brooklyn "when I walked in and saw him tuning his guitar, and something in my head said: 'Ask him to marry you.' You know, it's like William Faulkner says: 'I listen to the voices.'"

She also loves William Faulkner. Likewise Edward Albee. Faulkner got the Nobel Prize and Albee has three Pulitzers at this writing, but neither of them were sitting where she was sitting, "at my desk in Los Angeles, struggling with something one night last October, when the phone rang out of the blue, and my husband answered it, and listened, and said: 'Honey, this sounds important,' and the safe"—filled with the greenbacks of the MacArthur Grant—"fell on my head." Tell *that* to the man going: "Watch me close watch me close now. Who see thuh red card who see thuh red card? I see thuh red card. Thuh red card is thuh winner. Pick thuh red card and you pick uh winner..." □



Suzan-Lori Parks

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WHO'S WHO IN THE CAST

ELLEN LAUREN (*Performer*). SITI Company Associate Artistic Director, Company member ten years. National and international venues: *bobrauschenbergamerica*, *Room*, *War of the Worlds*, *War of the Worlds – The Radio Play*, *Cabin Pressure*, *The Medium*, *Culture of Desire*, *Going Going Gone*, *Orestes*. SITI at Actors Theatre of Louisville: *Hay Fever*, *Miss Julie*, *Private Lives*. Ten years ongoing classes and residencies US and abroad, including SITI's Summer intensive at Skidmore College each year, and New York City studios each spring and fall. Festival venues with SITI include BAM's Next Wave Festival, Humana Festival of New American Plays, Edinburgh Festival, Toga International Festival, Bogota International Festival, Irish Life Festival, among others. Ongoing guest artist with The Suzuki Company of Japan under the direction of Tadashi Suzuki. Tours include the inaugural season of the Theater Olympics at

The Herod Atticus in Athens, The Moscow Art Theater, Shizuoka Performing Arts Center in Japan, Teatro Olimpico in Italy, International Festival of Chile in Santiago and most recently, a two month U.S. tour (*Dionysus*) in the fall of 2001. Associate Artistic Director, Toga International Summer School, Toga Mura, Japan, where she teaches the Suzuki method of actor training. Additional: *The Adding Machine*, *Picnic* (ATL); *The Women* (Hartford Stage); *Seven Deadly Sins* (NYC Opera - Kosovar Award for Anna II). Resident Company Member: Stage West, Milwaukee Rep., Alley. Faculty member: The Juilliard School of Drama.

ANNE BOGART (*Director*). Co-founded the SITI Company with Japanese director Tadashi Suzuki in 1992 and has been its Artistic Director ever since. Her SITI productions include *Score*, *Hay Fever*, *bobrauschenbergamerica*, *Room*, *War of the*

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WHO'S WHO IN THE CAST

Worlds, War of the Worlds – The Radio Play, Cabin Pressure, Bob, Culture of Desire, Private Lives, Miss Julie, Alice's Adventures, Small Lives/Big Dreams, Going, Going, Gone, The Medium, and Orestes. Since Anne's graduation in 1974 from Bard College, she has actively participated in American theater as a director, playwright, essayist, teacher, and recipient of numerous accolades: the Edwin Booth Award (2001), the Charles Flint Kellogg Award (2001), a Guggenheim Fellowship (2000/2001), an ATHE Career Achievement Award (1999), designation by the Actors Theatre of Louisville as Modern Master (1995), two Obies (1990 and 1988), a Bessie Award (1984), and a Villager Award (1980). She has also served as President of the Theatre Communications Group from 1990 to 1992. Ms. Bogart has taught at NYU, Tisch, ETW; UC San Diego; School for Movement Research; and Playwrights Horizons Theater School. She has been an Associate Professor at Columbia University, Graduate Theater Studies and an Advisor for their Graduate Directing Program from 1994 until the present. Anne has recently released her new book on the theater entitled, *A Director Prepares*, seven essays on art and theater; and was also the subject of a 1995 book, *Anne Bogart: Viewpoints*.

JOCELYN CLARKE (*Adaptation*). Mr. Clarke is Commissioning Manager of the National Theatre, Ireland (Abbey Theatre). He was lead theatre critic with *The Sunday Tribune* for nine years, and has lectured in theatre criticism and dramaturgy at the

Samuel Beckett Centre, University College Dublin, and DIT Theatre Programme. He has written three adaptations for the SITI Company — *Bob*, adapted from interviews with director Robert Wilson; *Alice's Adventures Underground*; and *Room*, from the writings of Virginia Woolf. For the Blue Raincoat Theatre Company in Sligo, Ireland, he has written two adaptations of Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, and *Through the Looking Glass*.

NEIL PATEL (*Set Design*). Classic Stage: *Race, I Will Bear Witness* (Obie). *Romeo and Juliet* (McCarter); *Othello* (NYSF); *Le Nozze di Figaro* (Tokyo Bunka Kaikan); and *Score* (SITI at the Wexner); *Side Man* (Broadway, the West End, Kennedy Center, Parco Theatre in Tokyo); *Dinner with Friends* (Variety Arts Theatre and national tour). His work with Anne Bogart and the SITI Company, of which he is a member, has been seen at the Edinburgh International Festival, the Exit Festival in Paris, the Holland Festival, the Hebbel Theatre in Berlin, Theatre Archa in Prague, NYTW and most recently at BAM where *War of the Worlds* launched the 2000 Next Wave Festival. Awards: Two Drama Desk nominations; numerous Dramalogue Awards; Obies for Sustained Excellence (1996, 2001); EDDY Award for his work with SITI. Education: Yale College, Accademia Belle Arti di Brera and UC San Diego.

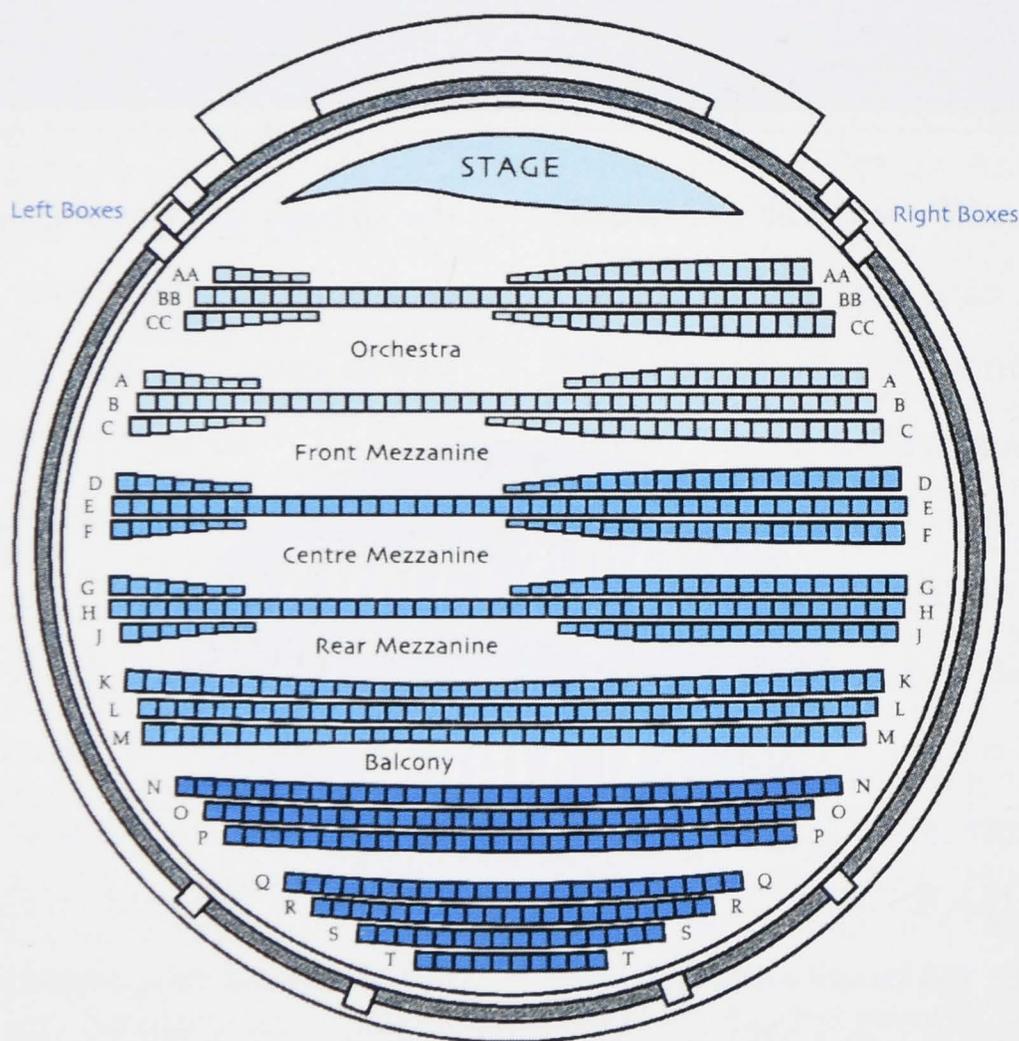
JAMES SCHUETTE (*Costume Design*). Recent work includes *Lady in the Dark*



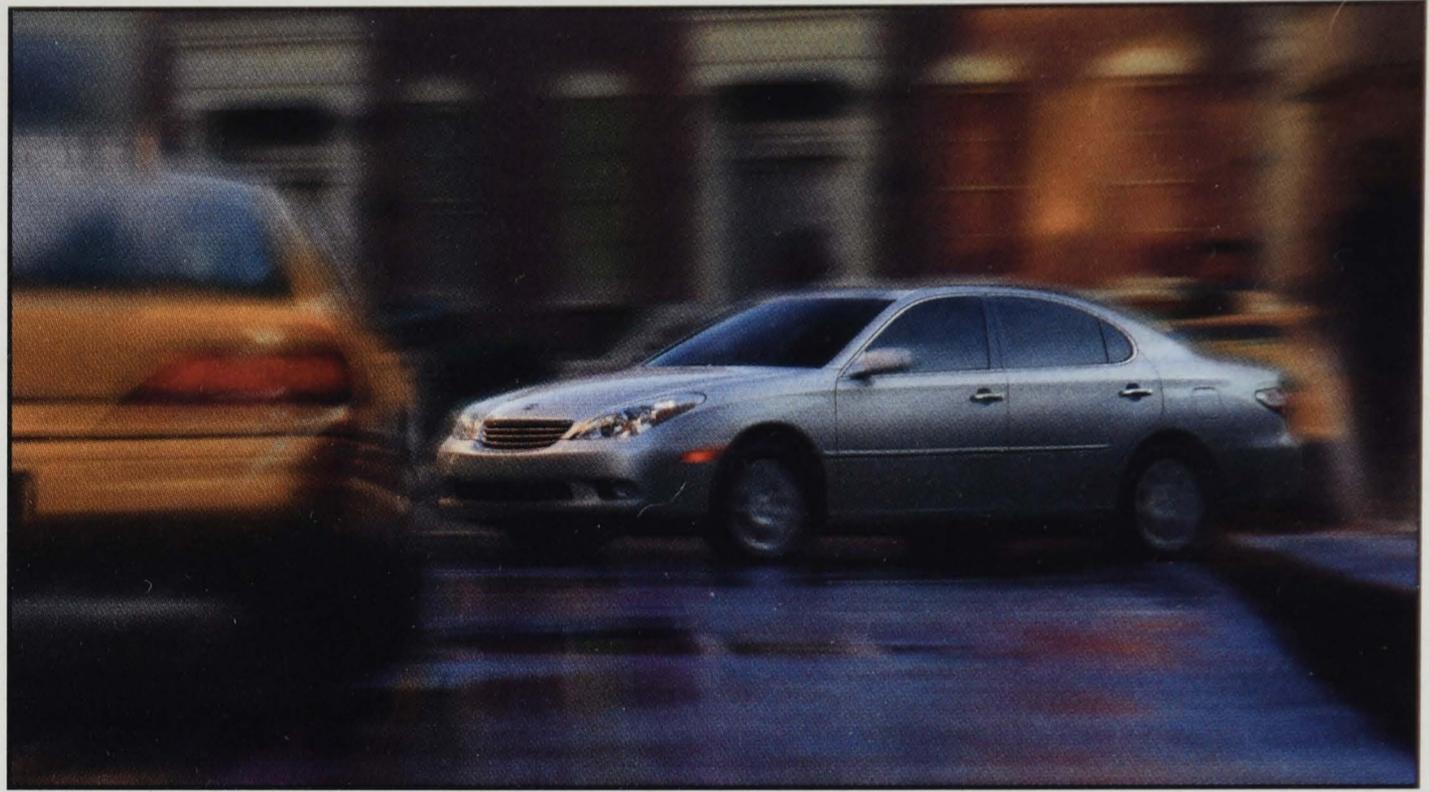
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WHO'S WHO IN THE CAST

(Prince Music Theatre), *Mother Courage and her Children* (Steppenwolf), *Big Love* (Long Wharf, Berkeley Rep., Goodman) and *Lilith* (NYC Opera). SITI: *bobrauschenbergamerica* (sets and costumes), *War of the Worlds*, *Cabin Pressure*, *Room*, *Bob*, *Alice's Adventures*, *Private Lives*, and *The Adding Machine*. Other work: *Floyd Collins* (Old Globe, Goodman, Prince); *Berlin Circle*, *Time to Burn*, *Space* (Steppenwolf); *Saturn Returns*, *The Treatment*, *The Chang Fragments*, *Insurrection: Holding History*, *Book of the Dead* (Public); *The Seven Deadly Sins* (NYC Opera); *Transatlantic* (Minnesota Opera); *La Bohème* (Glimmerglass Opera and NYC Opera); *Carmen* (Sante Fe Opera); Laurie Anderson's *Songs and Stories from Moby Dick* (BAM Next Wave Festival); and work at the Taper, NYTW, and En Garde Arts. Graduate: Yale School of Drama.

CHRISTOPHER AKERLIND (*Lighting Designer*). With Anne Bogart/SITI: *Hayfever*, *Score*, *Lilith*. Classic Stage: *Thérèse Raquin*, *Iphigenia and Other Daughters*. Broadway: *The Tale of the Allergist's Wife*; *The Piano Lesson*; *Philadelphia, Here I Come!*; *Seven Guitars* (Tony nomination). Off-Broadway: *Mad Forest* (Drama Desk nomination); *Blown Sideways Through Life*; *Slavs!*; *Traps*; *Owners*; *Love and Anger*; *Troilus and Cressida*; *Silence Cunning Exile*; *The Skriker*; *The Lights* (Drama Desk nomination); *The Dying Gaul*; *The Butterfly Collection*. Regional: A.R.T., A.C.T., Hartford Stage, Goodman, Guthrie, Intiman, McCarter, Seattle Rep, Berkeley Rep, and Portland Stage Company. Opera: Hamburg; Glimmerglass, Santa Fe, Dallas,

Boston Lyric, Minnesota, Nissei/Tokyo, New York City Opera and over 45 productions at Opera Theater of Saint Louis. He is Director of the Design and Production Programs at the California Institute of the Arts and a recipient of an Obie Award for Sustained Excellence in Lighting Design.

DARRON L WEST (*Soundscape*). SITI Company member since 1993 and first collaborated with Bogart in 1990 while Resident Sound Designer at Actors Theatre of Louisville. Since joining SITI he has designed every show in the company's repertoire with *Bob* garnering a 1999 Obie Award and Drama Desk nomination for its Soundscape. Classic Stage: *The Misanthrope*. He is a Design Associate and Usual Suspect at New York Theatre Workshop, a three time Drama Desk, two time American Theatre Wing and two time Barrymore Award nominee for Sound Design, and a 2000 Entertainment Design EDDY award winner. Directing Credits include Charles L. Mee's production *Big Love* with the Rude Mechanicals Austin, Texas, *Euridice* by Sarah Ruhl at Childrens Theater Company and The SITI Company's *War of the Worlds - The Radio Play* (national tour).

ELIZABETH MOREAU (*Production Stage Manager*). With the SITI Company: *Score* (Wexner/ATL Humana Festival), *Room* (Performing Arts Chicago, UCLA, On the Boards), *Hay Fever* (ATL), *bobrauschenbergamerica* (ATL/Humana Festival), *Bob* (B.I.T.E. Festival, London), *Cabin Pressure* (Israel Festival, Jerusalem),

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War of the Worlds (Edison Theatre, St. Louis), *War of the Worlds – The Radio Play*. Other credits include *Dirty Blonde* (sub), *Bells are Ringing*, *Getting and Spending* on Broadway. Off-Broadway: *Kit Marlowe*, *In the Blood* (The Public), *Avow* (Century Center), *Lydie Breeze*, *What You Get and What You Expect* (New York Theatre Workshop), *Dream True*, *Mercy* (Vineyard), *Red*, *The Memory of Water* (Manhattan Theatre Company), *Chemistry of Change* (Women's Project/Playwright Horizons).

BRIAN H. SCOTT (*Associate Lighting Designer*). SITI Company Lighting Designer for *bobrauschenbergamerica* and *War of the Worlds - The Radio Play*. Recent projects include *Death of a Salesman* (in Baton Rouge, LA) *Gertrude and Alice* (Foundry); *Big Love*, *Lipstick Traces*, *El Paraiso* (Rude Mechanicals in Austin, Texas); *The Epiphany Project* (with composer John Hodian and songwriter Bet Williams); *Le Femme de Chambre* (Banal Molotov in Paris); *The Trojan Women* (Williams College and Will Bond); numerous projects at Actors Theatre of Louisville. Additionally, Brian has adapted numerous designs by Mimi Jordan Sherin and Christopher Akerlind in National and International tours for the SITI Company. Future SITI production: *Systems/Layers*.

BARNEY O'HANLON (*Movement Dramaturg*). Barney has been collaborating with Anne Bogart since 1986. With SITI: *bobrauschenbergamerica*, *War of the Words*, *War of the Worlds – the Radio Play*, *Cabin Pressure*, and *Small Lives/Big Dreams*. Other productions with Bogart: *Lilith*, *Seven Deadly Sins* (NYC Opera); Alley Theatre, Trinity Repertory; River Arts Repertory; and Opera/Omaha. Regional: *1969*, *Deadly Virtues*, *Hamlet* (ATL); *Stonewall: Night Variations* (EnGarde Arts); *A Fair Country* (Steppenwolf). His choreography has appeared at BAM, NYTW, NYC Opera and at the Prince Music Theatre. He has worked with choreographers Doug Varone, Doug Elkins, Spencer/Colton, Creach/Koester, and directors Robert Wilson, Richard Foreman, Molly Smith, and Brian Jucha.

CLASSIC STAGE COMPANY is the Off-Broadway theater that re-imagines the classics for contemporary audiences. Now in its 34th season, Classic Stage celebrates the living impulses that make classic stories endure. Creating vibrant contemporary theater that speaks vividly and directly to today, Classic Stage allows audiences to understand in striking new ways how the shared human experience resonates across time. Classic Stage invites the best established and emerging artists in all disciplines of theater to create works for audiences of all ages and backgrounds. Through our mainstage programming, humanities and educational activities, publications and audience discussions, as well as our "Classic Stages / New Visions" developmental series, we reach out to a constituency as diverse as the classics we produce. Recent Classic Stage productions: World Premiere of Steve Martin's *The Underpants*; World Premiere of Neal Bell's *Monster*; New York premiere of Philip Glass' *In the Penal Colony*, directed by JoAnne Akalaitis; Ferdinand Bruckner's *Race*, published by Dramatists Play Service; Bill Irwin's acclaimed adaptation of Beckett's *Texts for Nothing*; a stage version of Victor Klemperer's Third Reich diary, *I Will Bear Witness*; Jonson's masterpiece *The Alchemist*; Osborne's *Look Back in Anger*; *The Misanthrope* featuring Roger Rees and Uma Thurman; *Waiting for Godot* featuring John Turturro, Christopher Lloyd and Tony Shalhoub. Classic Stage's 2001 season won three Obie Awards. Our productions have been cited repeatedly by all the major Off-Broadway theater awards: Obie, Drama Desk, Outer Critics Circle, Drama League, and the 1999 Lucille Lortel Award for Outstanding Body of Work.

BARRY EDELSTEIN (*Artistic Director*) most recently directed *The Underpants*, last season's *Race*, 2000's season's *The Alchemist* and *Hurricane*, and 1999's *The Misanthrope* with Roger Rees and Uma Thurman. Other credits: Arthur Miller's *All My Sons* (Roundabout; won Lucille Lortel Award and nominated for Drama Desk and Drama League Awards, Outstanding Revival); many Shakespeare plays at theaters around the country, including *Julius Caesar* (NYSF/Central Park); and *The Mer-*

WHO'S WHO IN THE CAST

chant of Venice (Public) and *As You Like It* starring Gwyneth Paltrow (Williamstown). He teaches Shakespeare at the Juilliard School, the Graduate Acting Program at NYU and the Public Theater's Shakespeare Lab. He has directed many other classical plays, from Aristophanes through the Spanish Golden Age and English Renaissance, to Shaw and other major 20th Century European and American classics. Edelstein has also directed contemporary works by such writers as Steve Martin, Paul Schrader, Alan Zweibel, Erin Cressida Wilson, and Paula Vogel. A graduate of Tufts University, he holds an *M. Phil.* in English Renaissance Drama from Oxford University, where he studied as a Rhodes Scholar.

ANNE TANAKA (*Producing Director*) joins Classic Stage Company after three years at The Producing Office, where she worked on the Broadway musical *Rent* and *De La Guarda* in New York, Las Vegas and London. She has also held positions at The New York

Shakespeare Festival/Public Theater and at Lincoln Center Theater, and is a graduate of the University of California, San Diego.

RACHEL M. TISCHLER (*General Manager*) is in her second season with Classic Stage Company. She has stage managed for regional theaters around the country, including South Coast Repertory, Goodspeed Opera House, and Wolf Trap and was the Resident Stage Manager for The Opera Company of Philadelphia and Cincinnati Opera. Rachel was the Associate Managing Director for the Yale Repertory Theatre and worked on Broadway in the Company Management Office for *The Lion King*. She holds holds an MA from the University of Chicago and an MFA from the Yale School of Drama.

THE SITI COMPANY. The SITI Company, celebrating its tenth year of activity, began as an agreement between Tadashi Suzuki and Anne Bogart to establish a new

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venture in the United States that would emphasize international cultural exchange and collaboration. SITI believes in a commitment to the power of the theater as a source of spiritual strength in the contemporary global environment. Originally envisioned as a summer institute in Saratoga Springs, NY, SITI grew quickly into a year-round theater company based in New York City. An ensemble-based theater company, SITI exemplifies the disciplines it practices and the artistic values it develops in its work. The company's mission is to create new works for the theater, to perform and tour these productions nationally and internationally, to provide ongoing training for young theater professionals in an approach to acting that forges unique and highly disciplined artists for the theater, and to foster opportunities for cultural exchange with theater professionals and audiences from all over the world. Most recently, SITI has created *Score*, which premiered at the Wexner Center and at Actors Theatre of Louisville's Humana Festival of New American Plays. Other SITI productions include *Orestes*; *The Medium*; *Small Lives/Big Dreams*; *Going, Going, Gone*; *Miss Julie*; *Culture of Desire*; *Bob*; *Private Lives*; *Alice's Adventures*; *War of the Worlds*; *Cabin Pressure*; *War of the Worlds - the Radio Play*; *bobrauschenbergamerica*; and *Hayfever*. Future productions: *Fêtes de la Nuit*, *Systems/Layers*, *Reunion*, *The Club*.

MEGAN WANLASS SZALLA (*SITI Managing Director*). A SITI Company member since 1995, Megan was the company stage manager for five years prior to becoming SITI's Managing Director. She began working with Anne Bogart during *The Adding Machine* at Actors Theatre of Louisville. She recently finished a certificate program in Arts Administration at New York University and is currently on the board of an arts and entertainment alumni organization for her alma mater, Occidental College.

Information in "Who's Who in the Cast" is provided by the production. Where opinions are expressed, they are those of the players, not necessarily those of PLAYBILL Magazine.

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Notes

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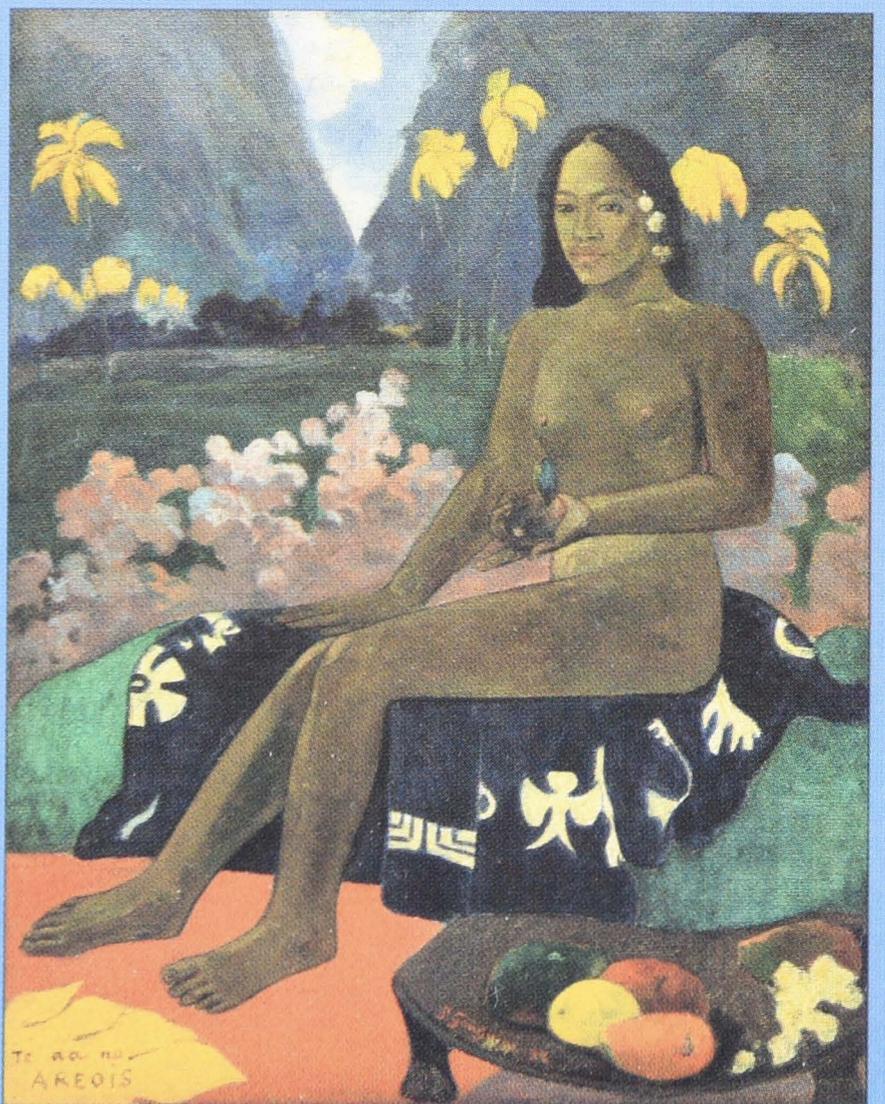
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Paul Gauguin, *Te aa no areoi (The Seed of the Areoi)*, 1892, The Museum of Modern Art, New York, The William S. Paley Collection.



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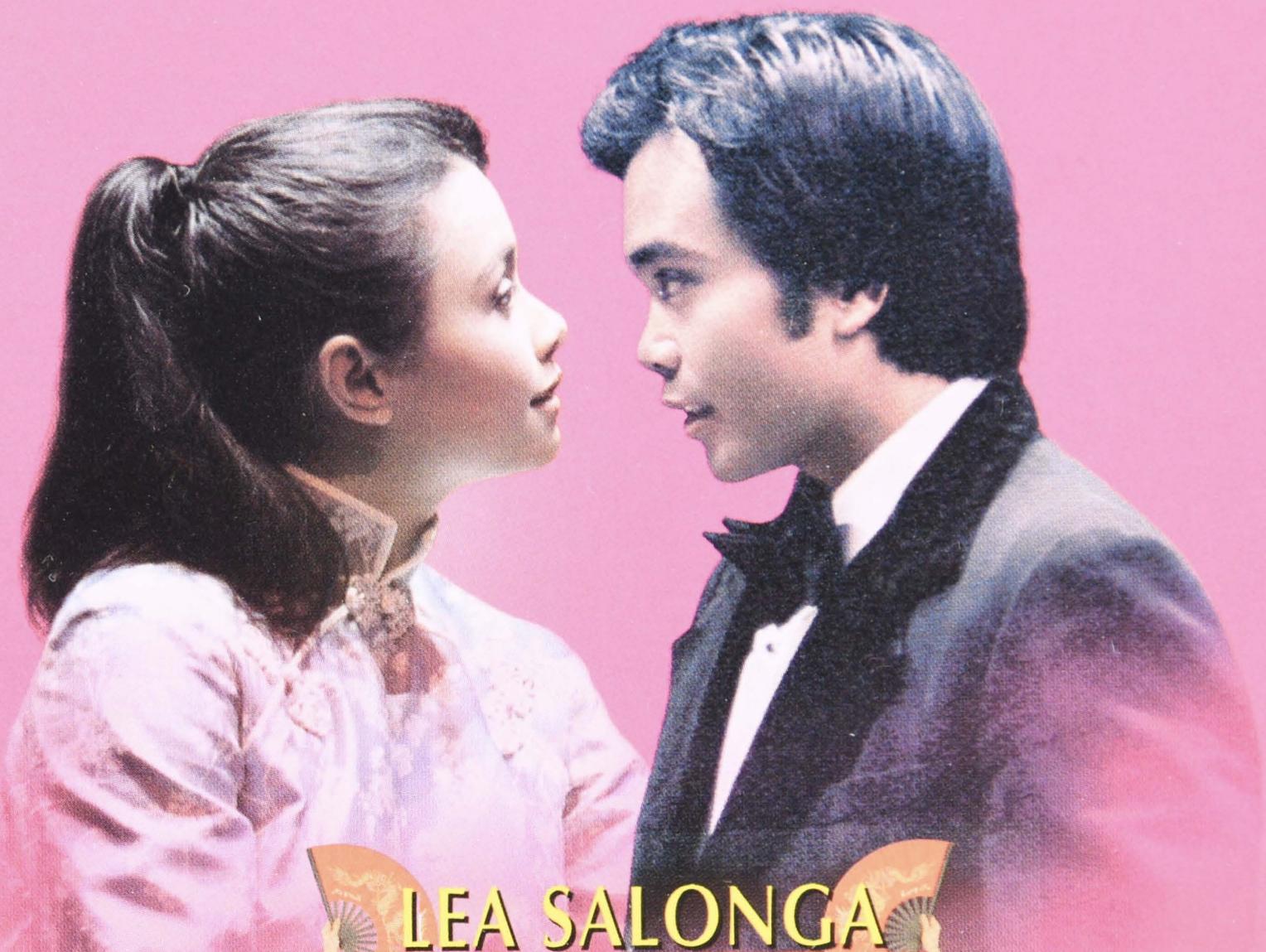
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Curator: Kevin Kish has lived and worked in New York since 1988. He is the curator of the Gallery at Roundabout, a gallery in theater program that he assisted in developing in 1993. He is the founder of Kevin Kish Fine Art, Inc.

Artist: Susan Breen lives and works in New York City. She is represented by Woodward Gallery. Susan's paintings have been exhibited in numerous galleries on the East Coast, including Woodward Gallery, Gale Gates Gallery, Aljira, Reggio Gallery, and the Gallery at Roundabout, among others. She has a BA in fine arts from Boston College and an MFA in painting from the School of Visual Arts. Susan is Art Editor of the literary magazine Post Road.

Artworks in The Gallery at Classic Stage Company are available for purchase. Please visit the Box Office for details.



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The people have spoken! More than 15,000 theatre fans across the US voted for the second annual **National Broadway Theatre Awards**, the only fan-selected awards for touring Broadway shows. Visit www.nationalbroadwayawards.com for the winners list and info on voting in 2003.

Stars of Touring Broadway

Touring Broadway shows visit as many as 140 North American cities each year, and many theatres depend on the generosity of local supporters to help them share the excitement of Broadway with their audiences. At its annual Road Conference last month, the League of American Theatres and Producers bestowed its annual **Star of Touring Broadway Awards** on individuals and businesses who promote touring Broadway in their communities from coast to coast.

There were two awards. One went to **David and Elizabeth Kruidenier**, longtime supporters of the Civic Center of Greater Des Moines, who led the effort to build what has become the home of the largest touring Broadway series in Iowa. The **CIT Group**

received the other award for their major support of the New Jersey Performing Arts Center in Newark.

At the same event, the League bestowed its 2002 **Distinguished Lifetime Service Award for Touring Broadway** on **James M. Nederlander**. As chairman of the theatre chain that bears his surname, Mr. Nederlander operates touring Broadway venues in Chicago, Detroit, Los Angeles, San Jose and San Diego; his list of notable producing credits is far too extensive to list here.

The Tony Awards®

Even if you missed the PBS/CBS broadcast of the American Theatre Wing's 2002 Tony Awards (co-presented by the League) on June 2, you can still experience the excitement of the theatre's most prestigious honors by logging on to www.tonys.org. The site features behind-the-scenes coverage of the Tonys—plus a comprehensive database of past winners and nominees. Tonys.org is an IBM e-business solution, with news content provided in cooperation with Playbill® On-Line™ (www.playbill.com).

AOL Time Warner
presents

Broadway Under the Stars

It might just be the most romantic summer evening the Big Apple has to offer. Introducing Broadway Under the Stars, a free, outdoor celebration of New York City held in Bryant Park on June 10. The event matches live star performances from the Broadway songbook with classic moments from quintessential New York films. Add a singing-and-dancing chorus and a 30-piece orchestra and you get a new tradition to kick off the summer outdoor concert season. Broadway Under the Stars is presented by AOL Time Warner and produced by the League and NYC & Company.

Monday, June 10 • 8 p.m. • Bryant Park • Free
Raindate: June 11

"Stage Directions from the League" is presented, courtesy of *Playbill*, by The League of American Theatres and Producers, Inc., the national trade association for the commercial theatre industry.

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Ricky Jay in a scene from
Ricky Jay: On The Stem

BRIGITTE LACOMBE

MAMET'S MERLIN

Ricky Jay: On The Stem, directed by David Mamet, brings the sleight of hand wizard back to the stage in fine and truly amazing form

by Monty Arnold

What laughs are to a comedian and tears are to a tragedian, gasps are to a magician, and Ricky Jay generates a goodly amount in his second Second Stage offering. "This is one of the things artists don't talk about too much," he admits. "Some I hear, some I don't. You have to rely on people around you to say, 'That's going really well. People are gasping.'"

They can say that again. The power to astonish—a lost (or, certainly, mislaid) art of late—makes a robust comeback in *Ricky Jay: On The Stem*. Like its predecessor—*Ricky Jay and his 52 Assistants*, which played two different sold-out gigs here—this is a sleight of hand amusement built around a deck of cards—and, by extension, around those who

play them for fun and profit. Ricky Jay has been in that number since the age of four, when his maternal grandfather, an accomplished amateur magician named Max Katz, first exposed him to card tricks. Today, Jay brings new meaning to the moniker "card-sharp" and has been known to throw from 50 paces a playing card into the flesh of a watermelon. (Perhaps you know his book, *Cards as Weapons*.) He also made the Guinness Book of Records for throwing a playing card 190 feet at 90 miles per hour.

Those who make their dubious living by the turn of the card are, by definition, a mixed bag of tricksters, and Jay clearly delights in dipping into this bag for his mesmerizing monologues, having thoroughly (even obsessively) researched the subjects

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“The element that I really care about is surprise,” says Jay. “It’s not nearly about fooling someone as it is about surprising them and making the entertainment come from that surprise.”

who cropped up around the turn of the century on the fringe of a civilized society—“on the stem,” in other words. “It was another way of saying the main drag of the city, and it was particularly used around here,” he notes. “Broadway is a term that doesn’t appear until after the turn of the century.”

His approach to these shifty denizens “on the stem” is both scholarly and scampish, betraying an authentic love and knowledge for those who preceded him at the gaming tables and those who toiled a little farther out on the legalistic, ethical limb. (Perhaps you know his book, *Learned Pigs & Fireproof Women*, which chronicles the bizarre performers found in circuses and side shows—or his most recent tome, a compendium of all 16 issues of his now-retired quarterly, *Jay’s Journal of Anomalies*.) The contents of his books and shows are summed up in the latter’s subtitle: *Conjurers, Cheats, Hustlers, Hoaxsters, Pranksters, Jokesters, Imposters, Pretenders, Side-Show Showmen, Armless Calligraphers, Mechanical Marvels, Popular Entertainments*.

Jay fairly spiels over with a flavorful facsimile of the above, delivering his fact-stacked banter like a side show barker, which, indeed, he was when he wasn’t an author, actor, accountant, encyclopedia salesman and singer with the group Chico and the Deaftones.

First and last, he is a magician—and the theatrical pedigree falling under his spell is indeed impressive, starting with no less than David Mamet. Mamet turned director to get his own plays to the marketplace intact, and the only times he has directed anything he hasn’t written were the two plays written by Jay. Mamet calls Jay’s mind “the ultimate repository of arcane information” and tickles the fascinating tidbits into dramatic place.

Jules Fisher, who lit both shows, introduced them. “Jules knew David was interested in the kinds of things that I was doing and set something up. We hit it off almost instantly. That was almost 20 years ago, when I stopped working clubs. It just became obvious to me that, when I was per-

forming live, I wanted to be in a theatre—that this was the right venue for me.” Mamet encouraged the thought after Jay lectured his acting class and drew on Jay’s technical advice for a play (*The Shawl*) and a film (*House of Games*).

The latter accommodated two debuts—Mamet’s as director and Jay’s as actor—and the result prompted them to reteam five more times (*Things Change, Homicide, The Spanish Prisoner, State and Main* and *Heist*). Then, a Mamet actor and frequent co-star, William H. Macy, introduced him into another weirdly off-center world—Paul Thomas Anderson’s (*Boogie Nights* and *Magnolia*)—and another writer-director was charmed by an abruptly full-blown character actor with loads of lowlife potential. “I’ve never thought of their motivation at making me play such sleazy guys, but I like it. We should all be so lucky to work with people that talented. This is my mid-life career. I never aspired to be a film actor, and I’m not out begging to be put in films. I’ve been able to be selective and work with people whom I truly admire and who write scripts that are just a pleasure to do.”

Given that Jay’s a guy who likes his privacy and his secrets, it took considerable PR wizardry—lots of conjuring and cajoling from press agents—to make the magician appear at all for interviews. He subscribes to the less-you-know-better-off-you-are theory, that talking it up only takes away from the ultimate effect. “I’ve never had any problem with reviewers,” he allows, “but the one thing I fear is that someone tells too much about an effect or that someone isn’t surprised. The element that I really care about is surprise. It’s not nearly about fooling someone as it is about surprising them and making the entertainment come from that surprise. I think my show is structured so that they are being surprised not only in terms of the performance but in terms of the patter as well.”

In any event, the gasps and gags have been extended into July—and could go longer. □

LOST IN CYBERSPACE

Mike Daisey's one-man show, *21 Dog Years: Doing Time@Amazon.com*, is an insider's darkly humorous account of life at a dot-com

by Roger Maxwell

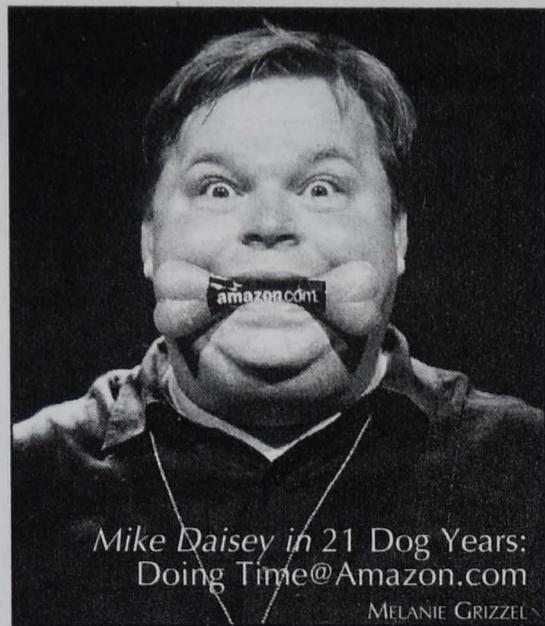
The general belief that one human year equals seven years in a dog's life is wrong, Mike Daisey tells us. It depends on the breed and size of the dog, and charts based on this sliding scale were posted all over the Seattle headquarters of Amazon.com, where Daisey worked for 21 intense, bizarre dog years from July 1998 to February 2000.

Like everybody else at that vast dot-com, Mike, who came away with a major in Aesthetics and a minor in Medieval History from Colby College, Maine, was made to sign a Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA) before going on payroll at what, in his innocence, he took to be "a lesbian Internet bookstore." Some bookstore.

"One year and one day after I quit Amazon I started this show, at a little pub in Seattle called Speakeasy Back Room, which has since, unfortunately, burned down." It was a first, groping version of the hilarious yet scary *21 Dog Years: Doing Time@Amazon.com* that, fuller fleshed, is now rocking Off-Broadway's historic Cherry Lane Theatre with cyberlaughter. The director is his wife, Jean-Michele Gregory.

In the course of 90 minutes Daisey bounces from the Zero Mostelish embodiment of a herd of wounded dinosaurs (his co-workers) kept alive on a ceaseless supply of bagels, to the galactic blandness of a Customer's Service rep advising "You, the consumer" of "[your] duty to wait on the phone four or six hours to talk to us," to a short course on the intricacies of "metrics" (once known as Stakhanovism, or how hard can the bastards push us?), to the extraordinary moment when one of Daisey's pink-baby hands frantically murders the "stupid metaphorical" other.

That's when Daisey, who'd gone to work



Mike Daisey in *21 Dog Years: Doing Time@Amazon.com*
MELANIE GRIZZEL

at Amazon.com for the dental insurance, got out. But not before he'd written a few jolly letters to Jeff Bezos, the real-life CEO and founder of Amazon.com, a man who loves dogs so much he has packs of them wandering through the halls there. Bezos has not yet answered the correspondence. "Once at a Business Development session I spilled coffee on him, by accident," Daisey says in an offstage reflection after the show. "Our moment of greatest intimacy."

The two basic truths he learned from his 21 dog years at Amazon.com are that (1) "individuals, unlike corporations, are generally not insane," but (2) the world is well stocked with other individuals who "are not early adapters to the Internet [T]hey have no money, they have no computers, and they live in asylums."

Mike Daisey, though he admits to being the kind of "freak" the dot-coms are always trying to recruit—"I don't know if I'm as much a freak now as I was then, but yeah"—is, as the saying goes, crazy like a fox. Born in New Jersey 29 years ago, raised in Maine, he'd held some pretty outlandish jobs before Amazon: blood plasma seller, rape counselor, cow innard remover at a slaughter house, night janitor in a home for the violently mentally ill.

His fox—tall, slim Jean-Michele, the granddaughter of Catholic refugees from Poland—isn't crazy at all. She and Mike met as fellow actors "in a really bad German Expressionist play" in Seattle. They now live in Brooklyn. She's working on a book about her grandmother. Mike, who back in college wrote and produced a play about Bertolt Brecht, thinks he might like to do that again. He can always advertise it on Amazon.com. □



passing stages

by Louis Botto

CHILDREN'S THEATRE

Inside Broadway, the non-profit organization that offers exciting arts-in-education programs to over 50,000 young people in the public school system, is celebrating its 20th anniversary this year.

In June, the organization is staging its annual Broadway Beacon Awards at the Marriott Marquis Hotel. The awards are given to individuals and organizations that are supportive of arts in education in the New York City public school system. This year's honorees are Karen Mason of *Mamma Mia!*, Boyd Gaines of *Contact*, the publication *Back Stage*, the RCA Victor Group and New York City public school teacher Lynne Foster.

Recent events sponsored by Inside Broadway include its acclaimed *Duke Ellington's Sophisticated Ladies* show, staged in over 26 school performances in the metropolitan region. *Creating the Magic*, designed to give students an idea of what

it takes to begin a career in the theatre, took place on May 24. The seminar consisted of two musical performances from *Mamma Mia!* for a total of 2,500 schoolchildren at the Winter Garden Theatre, demonstrations of stage technology and a Q&A session. Performers and technicians shared their professional experiences with students, sparking the interest of Broadway's next generation of actors, actresses and theatregoers.

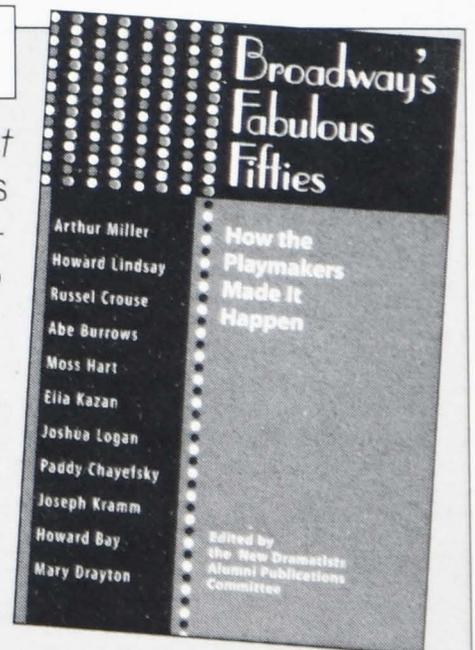
NIXON'S LIST

In a November 1956 issue of the long-gone magazine *Theatre Arts*, I recently found this fascinating item. Asked to name his ten favorite plays, Richard Nixon, then Vice President of the U.S., listed these works: *South Pacific*, *The King and I*, *Brigadoon*, *The Teahouse of the August Moon*, *Tobacco Road*, *Autumn Crocus*, *Guys and Dolls*, *Darkness at Noon*, *Mister Roberts* and *The Caine Mutiny Court-Martial*.

SOME ENCHANTED EVENINGS

Broadway's Fabulous Fifties: How the Playmakers Made It Happen, edited by The New Dramatists Alumni Publications Committee, is a must-read for anyone aspiring to be a playwright. In the early 1950's, the New Dramatists, a group formed by Michaela O'Harra and Howard Lindsay to nurture and further the development of American playwrights, inaugurated a series of evening "craft discussions," at which famed theatre professionals discussed their careers. Ten of these discussions were recorded and are presented in this book. The 11 professionals who imparted advice to their audience: Arthur Miller, Howard Lindsay, Russel Crouse, Abe Burrows, Moss Hart, Elia Kazan, Joshua Logan, Paddy Chayefsky, Joseph Kramm, Howard Bay and Mary Drayton.

These evenings produced some memorable quotations. Howard Lindsay was asked by a fledgling playwright to define what was dramatic. Lindsay replied: "Two hungry dogs with one juicy bone between them." Another unnamed old pro was asked if a gifted but egotistical, trouble-brewing actor should be dismissed from a show. The answer: "I'll take a talented bastard every time." This fascinating book is published by Heinemann (\$18.95).



face: the facts

by Jennifer Lanter

Where can you get the biggest bang for your beauty bucks? Behold!

The four masks in Lancôme's new collection address all summer skincare issues. (For a super summer glow, use Hydra-Intense or Confort-Riche Masque before self-tanning.)



The best-kept \$250 secret is Estée Lauder's Re-Nutriv Ultimate Lifting Creme, an indulgent, luxurious investment for your skin.

Protect blemish-prone skin with Clinique's Acne Solutions Daytime Shield, which creates a breathable barrier to protect skin while improving its overall quality.



Noticed signs of aging around the eyes? Who hasn't! Chanel's Precision Age Delay Eye rejuvenation gel is formulated to make you forget what you saw in the mirror this morning.



Dior's new self-tanning skincare turns gold into bronze! Upon application, skin is illuminated with golden micro-powders. In less than an hour, gold becomes a radiant, even bronze.

Need a tote for your goodies? Bring this issue's Macy's ad along with your current receipt for any Macy's Herald Square purchase of \$50 or more to the Visitor Center on the 34th Street Balcony and receive a free* Macy's signature tote bag or backpack. There's a limit of one bag per person, so hurry over to the Visitor Center while supplies last. *Receipt must be within five days.



celebrity choice

by Bob Edison



Edward Hibbert
(Frederick in
Noises Off
at the Brooks Atkinson
Theatre) chooses
BRASSERIE,
100 E. 53rd Street,
bet Park & Lexington Aves.



Jessica Boevers
(Ado Annie in *Oklahoma!*
at the Gershwin
Theatre) chooses
**HEARTLAND
BREWERY & CHOP
HOUSE**,
127 W. 43rd Street,
bet. 6th Ave. & B'way

Brasserie, now happily reincarnated as a chic destination restaurant, can boast the same Seagram Building smartness as was evident in its former life—but little else remains. Today, a decidedly futuristic look prevails, and its affluent appreciators respond to the hip bar scene and trendy appointments.

We spied a gaggle of famous faces, from socialites to Ringling Bros. Circus stars to cast members of time and critic-honored plays like *The Elephant Man* and *Morning's at Seven*, enjoying executive chef Luc Dimnet's contemporary takes on such pleasers as grilled Norwegian salmon filet, coq au vin, rack of lamb, filet Mignon au poivre and hearty bouillabaisse and cassoulet—all done with the verve and expertise one associates with this Restaurant Associates exponent of true star quality.

BRASSERIE is open seven days from 7 am–1 am. Dinner entrees \$10–\$29. Rec. weekend brunch. Exc. priv. parties; wine list extraordinaire. Dreamy desserts by Martin Howard. Casual dress. CC. Reservations. **751-4840**.

Though the hearty Heartland Brewery & Chop House may appear to exhibit some familiar steak house “guy” touches, women love this theatre district haven, too. We spied Warren Beatty and Annette Bening admiring the mellowness of it all, along with the Rock (leading man of the movie *The Scorpion King*), stars of *Urinetown*, *The Lion King* and Joy Behar of “The View.”

Our waiter-cum-actor Pavel Lempert suggested succulent crab cakes with lobster sauce, smoked grilled pork tenderloin with BBQ sauce, Cajun ribeye steak and a variety of other Heartland specialties. Withal, the prices are quite fair and the food and drink appealing; especially as seen through the prism of expert, hands-on owner Jon Bloostein's sensibility. And chef Richard Pietromonaco can take a deep bow, too.

HEARTLAND BREWERY & CHOP HOUSE is open seven days. Mon.–Sat. 11:30 am–11 pm. Sun. 11 am–10 pm. Din. entrees \$10.95–\$27.95. Award-winning beers & sodas made on premises. Pre-theatre dinner \$23.95. Wine list. Party rooms. Cas. dress. Res. **(646) 366-0235**.

after theatre

VICTOR'S CAFE 52nd How does this legendary Cuban-Caribbean dinery retain its sheen? Credit famed founder Victor del Corral and daughter Sonia with their warm, hands-on experience, along with the astuteness of manager Patricia. Chef Expedito's creations shimmer and the sultry-weather cocktails and fine service seem better than ever. Open till midnight seven eves. 236 W. 52nd St. (bet. B'way and 8th Ave.) 586-7714.

CHURRASCARIA PLATAFORMA The most exciting exemplar of Brazilian rodizio is at this theatre area treasure, so what more apt segue than the close-by international hit *Mamma Mia*? The bountiful salad display and “endless” procession of meat, fish and fowl quality is nonpareil, thus making the \$38.95 pre-theatre dinner tab darned reasonable! Open every day through midnight. 316 W. 49th St. (bet. 8th & 9th Aves.) 245-0505.

Dining and Entertainment

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- **APPLEBEE'S NEIGHBORHOOD GRILL & BAR**—234 W. 42nd St. (7th & 8th). Best burgers, steaks, salads, fish at the most reasonable prices in NY. Before or after the show, enjoy great food in an exciting atmosphere. 7 days, 7 am–2 am. B, L & D. **391-7414**.
- **FILM CENTER CAFÉ**—635 9th Ave. bet. 44th & 45th Sts. Bar/Rest., Kitchen open late, Raw Bar, PT/AT D, C, \$9.95. Unlimited Champagne Br. Sat. & Sun. Noon–4 pm. Op. 7 days. Lun. Mon.–Fri. Noon–4 pm, Din. 4 pm–4 am Sun.–Wed., 4 pm–4 am. Thurs.–Sat. CC. **262-2525**.
- **HEARTLAND BREWERY & CHOP HOUSE**—127 W. 43rd. Amer. classic with a twist! Turn of the century charm, innovative "Chop House" menu & Award-Winning Beers made on premises. L M.–Sa. 11:30–2:30, D M.–Th. 5:30–10:30, F. & Sa. till 11. Su. 12–8. **646-366-0235**.
- **JW'S STEAKHOUSE**—NY Marriott Marquis 1535 B'way. Contemporary steakhouse with the finest steaks, chops & seafood and award-winning wine list. \$29.95 dinner prix fixe, available 5 pm–7:30 pm. Closed Mon. **704-8900**.
- **ROSIE O'GRADY'S**—800 Seventh Ave. (52nd St.). Home of a Great Steak. Lobster, Poultry, Pasta and Seafood. 7 Days L & D, 11 am–12 am, \$9 park after 4 pm & matinees. Live music Sat. night. **212-582-2975**, and 149 W. 46th St.—steps off B'way. **212-869-0600**.
- **ST. ANDREWS**—120 W. 44th St. (6th & B'way). Rest. named after the famous Scottish golf course; the bartenders even wear kilts. Steaks, Seafood & Raw Bar. "Excellent \$27.95 Prix Fixe Lunch and Dinner." 7 days. Kitchen open late. **840-8413**.

AMERICAN/CONTINENTAL

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- **JOE FRANKLIN'S MEMORY LANE RESTAURANT & BAR**—713 8th Ave. (45th St.). In the heart of B'way. 7 days. L, D, PT & AT; Amer./European dishes incl. steak, veal, fresh fish, pasta. Dine surrounded by memories of great entertainers. Dis. P'king. **977-0025**.
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- **THE PIG 'N' WHISTLE**—165 W. 47th St. (bet. 6 & 7 Aves.) Broadway's best known Pub. Casual dining, ideal for pre and post theater. Burgers • Sandwiches • Steaks • Seafood • BBQ Ribs • Cocktails. Daily 11:30 am-4 am. Priv. Pty. Rm. CC. 212-302-0112.

IRISH/PUB/RESTAURANT

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B-Breakfast SB-Sunday Brunch L-Lunch C-Cocktails
PT-Pre-Theatre D-Dinner AT-After-Theatre S-Supper
CC-Credit Cards (6/02)

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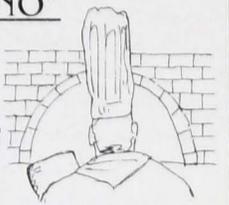
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42nd Street's Mary Testa and Jonathan Freeman are immortalized at Sardi's

FAME IN A FRAME

by Harry Haun

The two newest inductees to decorate the walls of that famous watering hole, Sardi's, are, on this particular matinee day, between shows, sitting at a corner table, basking in the newfound glory that hovers above them. How sweet it is!

As top bananas in *42nd Street*, Mary Testa and Jonathan Freeman give the tap spectacular a one-two comedy punch—from supporting positions, but it's enough to rate them their caricatures on the wall.

"This is for all the people who have been in the business forever," declares Testa, gesturing at her case-in-point. "We've done a lot of yeoman's work, and this is a lovely honor. I burst into tears when it happened to me. The week before, I was having these anxiety dreams that, when they unveiled the drawing, it would be a picture of Satan. I guess I was so relieved it wasn't Satan that I got overwhelmed and cried."

Freeman surveys the celebrity caricatures around him, plainly pleased to be in that number: "I've been coming here for 30 years, seeing all the pictures, wondering 'What do you have to do to get on the wall at Sardi's?'" And what did he find out? He answers that with a sheepish shrug: "You just keep doing what you're doing, I guess."

Certainly, that worked for him—just as it worked for Testa, who has been in the biz a quarter of a century herself. Both are crack-jack character actors with a penchant for comedy a mile wide, so it was inevitable their paths would cross before the *42nd Street* juncture. Three years ago they did *On the Town* together—but were never onstage at the same time. After that, they popped up in the same scene, sporting the same Russian accent (she as the countess, he as the ballet teacher), in a Bay Street Theatre revival of *You Can't Take It With You*. Then they did a duet for a salute to Betty Comden and Adolph Green. Now, they are Comden and Green (fictional facsimiles named Maggie Jones and Bert Barry) and find themselves, extending their symbiotic relationship beyond the footlights, finishing each other's sentences.



Jonathan Freeman and Mary Testa, framed at last

"No one can quite figure out what our characters are," Freeman admits. (Maggie 'n' Bert didn't exist in the fabled 1933 film on which the musical is based, but were invented for the stage version to cover a multitude of plot functions and carry the comic load.) "We say early on that we're the writers and the producers and we do comedy parts in the show within the show. In a way, it's quite crippling to say that. You're saying, 'We're going to be the funny people.' Then, if you don't get the laughs or aren't feeling particularly funny, you've set yourself up. Laughs are never a sure thing."

You don't have to go very far to find Serious Actors lurking under their comic mien. Freeman doesn't harbor a Hamlet, but Testa would love a shot at Kate in *The Taming of the Shrew*. "People have come to just expect me to be funny," she contends. "It's the business. People pigeonhole you, and you have a hard time getting seen for serious stuff. You can't be funny unless you know the serious side of things."

Freeman seconds that motion, and the two bat about some Exhibit A's—Ed Wynn, Nathan Lane, Zero Mostel, Jason Graae—before he concludes, "Your Honor, we rest our case."

Then, the fugitives from *42nd Street* table their discussion till another day. There's salmon to down before they shuffle off to Buffalo and enter, once again, laughing. □

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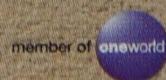


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