

Arena Stage's 2006/2007 Season

Cabaret

• Tony Award-winning musical •

Book by Joe Masteroff / Based on the play by John Van Druten and stories by Christopher Isherwood

Music by John Kander / Lyrics by Fred Ebb

Originally produced and directed for the Broadway stage by Harold Prince / Directed by Molly Smith

September 8 through October 29, 2006

In the Fichandler

"Meine Damen und Herren, Mesdames et Messieurs, Ladies and Gentlemen!" Welcome to *Cabaret* – a delicious, decadent journey to pre-World War II Berlin featuring unforgettable music and a powerful story. Young American journalist Clifford Bradshaw lands at the notorious Kit Kat Club, home to the social rebels and bohemians of Europe, where he falls madly in love with English entertainer Sally Bowles – but their affair is tested as her wild and reckless lifestyle overwhelms him. All the while, the Kit Kat Emcee taunts and satirizes the locals and visitors to the cabaret with dazzling musical numbers in a score that includes "Money (Makes the World Go Around)," "Maybe This Time" and "Two Ladies."

Sponsored by Gilbert and Jaylee Mead and by Shugoll Research

Nine Parts of Desire

• contemporary drama / D.C. premiere •

Written and performed by Heather Raffo / Directed by Joanna Settle

September 29 through November 12, 2006

In the Kreeger

This triumphant Off-Broadway hit is "an example of how art can remake the world" (*The New Yorker*). Taking its title from a famous Muslim maxim, *Nine Parts of Desire* introduces us to nine extraordinary women – eight Iraqi, one American of Iraqi descent – who share true and intimate stories of how their lives have been irrevocably affected by the war and its chaotic aftermath. Heather Raffo's poetic words and lyrical performance bring these women – among them a sensual painter, a grieving mother and a forgotten wife – vividly to life, conveying their deepest secrets, most terrifying fears, and ultimately, their yearning for love and peace amidst their devastated world.

She Loves Me

• delightful musical comedy •

Book by Joe Masteroff / Lyrics by Sheldon Harnick

Music by Jerry Bock / Based on a play by Miklos Laszlo

Directed by Kyle Donnelly

November 17 – December 31, 2006

In the Fichandler

Georg and Amalia can't stand each other. Intensely competitive clerks in a shop in 1930s Budapest, they are constantly at odds with one another. Each secretly finds solace in an anonymous pen pal – totally unaware that they are actually writing romantic letters to each other. This endearing tale of unlikely sweethearts, and the eccentric colleagues who aid and abet them, is an intelligent, romantic comedy with a touch of Old World elegance. From the songwriting team behind *Fiddler on the Roof*, the intoxicating score features the showstopping "Ice Cream," "Twelve Days to Christmas" and the popular title tune. *The New York Times* said it offers "a continuously melodic evening of sheer entertainment and complete escape."

Sponsored by Sue and Steve Bralove, John and Linda Derrick, Wendy and Frank Raines, Mark and Merrill Shugoll & Dick and Katie Snowdon

Noises Off

• madcap comedy •

By Michael Frayn / Directed by Jonathan Munby

December 15, 2006 through January 28, 2007

In the Kreeger

From the brilliant Michael Frayn (*Copenhagen, Democracy*) comes this riotous comedy of backstage politics and onstage pandemonium. As a third-rate theater troupe tours the third-rate farce *Nothing On*, the actors create a first-rate farce of their own – forgetting lines, dropping trousers, and losing countless plates of sardines. Behind the scenes, love triangles and ruined affairs add fury and revenge to the mayhem under the lights, leading to pratfalls, flying props and more than one bloody nose. In the end, at the frenetic final performance, the two farces merge into one perfectly ravaged and wholly uproarious theatrical nervous breakdown.

Sponsored by Donald and Nancy de Laski and Gina and John Despres

August Wilson's

Gem of the Ocean

• new drama / D.C. premiere •

Directed by Paulette Randall

January 26 through March 18, 2007

In the Fichandler

Like *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom* and *The Piano Lesson* before it, August Wilson's *Gem of the Ocean* is a powerful and evocative look at the culture and tradition of 20th century African-American life. In 1904 Pittsburgh, the mystical 285-year-old matriarch Aunt Ester leads spiritual journeys to the mythical City of Bones, where the truth has the power to "wash clean" the troubled souls who seek solace in her peaceful house. This Washington premiere of *Gem of the Ocean*, the ninth play in Wilson's historic, award-winning ten-part series, is presented as a loving tribute to this giant of American theater, who passed away in 2005.

Frankie and Johnny in the Clair de Lune

• bittersweet romance •

By Terrence McNally / Directed by David Muse

February 23 through April 8, 2007

In the Kreeger

"Pretend that we're the only two people in the entire world, that's what I'm doing, and it all falls into place." Johnny, a short-order cook in a diner, goes home with Frankie, a waitress, for a one-night stand. Both are past their prime, having seen their share of hard life and painful love. But Johnny knows the real thing when he sees it, and he is desperate to crack Frankie's hardened heart before she sends him home and they lose their chance at true love. Celebrated playwright Terrence McNally (*Love! Valor! Compassion!*, *Master Class*) delivers a witty, intimate and romantic play about the forging of a relationship between two lonely mid-life lovers.

The Heidi Chronicles

• contemporary comedy •

By Wendy Wasserstein / Directed by Tazewell Thompson

April 6 through May 13, 2007

In the Fichandler

Arguably her most recognized work, *The Heidi Chronicles* – winner of every major award in 1989 including the Tony and the Pulitzer – ignited Wendy Wasserstein's illustrious career, which was cut short by her untimely death in 2006. In this insightful comedy, Heidi Holland, feminist art historian, recounts significant milestones in her life – meeting lifelong friends at '60s political events, her own uncertain activism in the '70s, and finally confronting her inner turmoil over her role as a woman of the '80s and '90s. *The Heidi Chronicles* brings Wasserstein's grace, humor and smart sensibility to the dilemmas of modern womanhood, indelibly leaving her one-of-a-kind mark on American theater.

Sponsored, in part, by Hubert (Hank) and Charlotte Schlosberg

Peter & Wendy

• spectacular musical / D.C. premiere •

Adapted and produced by Liza Lorwin / Music composed and arranged by Johnny Cunningham

Designed by Julie Archer / Directed by Lee Breuer

April 27 through June 24, 2007

In the Kreeger

The story of Peter Pan and the Darling family comes magically to life in *Peter & Wendy*, a visually stunning and aurally breathtaking theatrical experience. Adults and children alike will be enchanted by this sophisticated production, an OBIE award winner based on J.M. Barrie's novel. Influenced by art from around the globe, *Peter & Wendy* reimagines a classic tale through elegant east Asian puppetry and a gorgeous Celtic musical score, resulting in a uniquely imaginative spectacle of the stage. See for yourself why this internationally celebrated musical was hailed by *The New York Times* as "having so much vitality and originality ... that a classic seems reborn" and why *The San Francisco Chronicle* saluted *Peter & Wendy* as "what it means to be carried away in the theater."

Sponsored, in part, by Helga Tarver

The 2006/07 season is sponsored by Joan and David Maxwell.