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STAGES

The Boston Globe

## Their applause for theater's magic moments

By Catherine Foster, Globe Staff | December 22, 2006

When you see a show, what do you remember long after the lights have come up and the applause has faded? For many audience members, what lingers in the mind is a single defining moment -- a phrase, a gesture, a song, a crucial pause. Here are the best moments in the local 2006 theater season, according to five notable veteran theatergoers.

### Jeff Poulos

*Executive director of StageSource*

"Caroline, or Change," by Tony Kushner and Jeanine Tesori, at SpeakEasy Stage Company.

"Jacqui Parker's number, 'Lot's Wife,' was a heartbreakingly beautiful, emotional song toward the end of the second act about the path that she's been down and the incredible challenges she's faced. She brought such emotion and passion to it, and yet in a very subtle presentation."

### Kate Snodgrass

*Artistic director of Boston Playwrights' Theatre and the Boston Theater Marathon*

"Mauritius," by Theresa Rebeck, at the Huntington Theatre Company.

"Sisters Mary and Jackie are fighting over the ownership of valuable stamps. In the final scene, Mary [played by Laura Latreille ], who has been hiding her true feelings for her sister [Marin Ireland ] under the guise of concern and fairness, spits out: 'Burn them! I won't give you anything!' Suddenly, the play's true meaning becomes clear -- it's not about stamps, it's about people."

### Jonathan C. Abbott

*Executive vice president and chief operating officer of WGBH*

"Frozen," by Bryony Lavery, at the New Repertory Theatre.

"The actress [Nancy E. Carroll ] who played the mother of the daughter who was killed was wrenching and captivating. I remember her stepping forward and revealing to the audience her loss and her unaddressable pain. I can't get her out of my head. My wife, Sheri, and I are sitting there as parents -- I didn't know much about what was coming -- but halfway through I just wanted to run home and be with my daughters. That's what theater does to you."

### Robbie McCauley

*Director, performance artist, playwright, teacher*

"Queer Theory," by Thomas DeFrantz, part of the Theater Offensive's Out on the Edge Festival.

"Thomas-Andre Bardwell's lip-synching performance, 'My Queer Popular Music Megamix,' made me laugh and cry and think out loud at the same time."

**Catherine Peterson**

*Executive director of ArtsBoston*

"The Pillowman," by Martin McDonagh, at New Rep.

"I have been haunted by how [director] Rick Lombardo married the horrific with the comedic in [it]. For me, it provided some of the theater's most striking moments of the year, with the audience taken for loop after loop (the first great turn occurring with Katurian's simple-minded brother confessing to the murders). The whole show was disarming, shockingly funny, and an extremely effective experience."

**Barrington Stage bounty**

Barrington Stage Company has announced its 2007-08 season. Running on the main stage are "West Side Story" (June 13-July 14 ), featuring the original Jerome Robbins choreography; Peter Shaffer's "Black Comedy" (July 19-Aug. 4 ); Chekhov's "Uncle Vanya" (Aug. 9-2 ); and a fall show to be announced. The BSC Stage II season starts in winter 2007 with Becky Mode's "Fully Committed" (Feb. 7 -18 ); then comes Jeffrey Hatcher's "A Picasso" (May 9-27 ). The Youth Theatre will feature "Disney's High School Musical" (July 11-Aug.14 ). The Musical Theatre Lab schedule will be announced later.

"West Side Story," which Boyd will direct, will run an unprecedented five weeks, because of high sales of FlexPass subscriptions. Single tickets will go on sale March 1.

Barrington has always allowed children 13 and under to get in free with a paying adult, and those 14-21 pay half price, Boyd says by phone. "When we did "South Pacific," we gave away \$25,000 in free and half-priced tickets. We want the kids." 413-236-8888 , [barringtonstageco.org](http://barringtonstageco.org).

**Enter 'Laughter'**

The Huntington Theatre Company has changed the final show of its 25th-anniversary season to the classic Noël Coward comedy "Present Laughter," starring Broadway, film, and television star Victor Garber ("Alias"), directed by Nicholas Martin. "Laughter" is replacing a revival of David Rabe's "Streamers" because of a schedule change for director Scott Ellis. "Present Laughter" will run May 18-June 17 and "Streamers" will move to November 2007, with Ellis directing.

**Notes**

Shakespeare & Company's final box office figures from its 2006 summer season pushed total ticket sales over the \$1 million mark, a new record, executive director Mark W. Jones has announced. . . . The Actors' Shakespeare Project has been chosen by the Social Innovation Forum , a Cambridge-based group that directs resources to innovative nonprofits, as one of four of Boston's 2007 Social Innovators. ASP's Incarcerated Youth at Play program led to its selection in the category of Empowering Youth Through the Arts. ASP will receive \$10,000 from its designated partner, Hunt Alternative Fund, and 12 months of coaching from the Social Innovation Forum. ■

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