



SDJJ | what's goin' on

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fresh entertainment for the new year

It's a brand new year, and that means the return of the San Diego Opera, the inaugural season for the Old Globe's new Harvey and Cheryl White Theatre (with a revival of Neil Simon's "Lost in Yonkers" to kick off the season), a new era of theatrical potpourri for the Welk Resort Theatre and a plethora of other music, theater and arts events around the county.

The San Diego Opera will launch its season Jan. 30 with Puccini's masterpiece "La Boheme," one of the most popular operas ever written. You have until Feb. 7 to see Karen Keltner conduct this production, starring Anja Harteros, Piotr Beczala, Priti Gandhi and Jeff Matsey. E. Loren Meeker will make his San Diego directorial debut in this bittersweet love story. As usual, the company will celebrate the opening with a pre-opera gala and a post-performance dinner at the US Grant.

You won't want to miss San Diego Opera's rendition of Verdi's "Nabucco," headed to the Civic Theatre Feb. 20-28. This story about the destruction of the Temple of Jerusalem and the enslavement of the Hebrews is a powerful and emotionally charged work directed by Lotfi Mansouri. The strong cast is headed by Zeljko Lucic as Nabucco and Raymond Aceto as Zaccaria.

The romantic tragedy "Romeo and Juliet" will feature opera's new "golden couple," Stephen Costello and Ailyn Perez, March 13-21 (with Keltner in the pit), and to complete the stellar season, Verdi's "La Traviata" will return April 14-25 with its soaring music, opulent costumes and stunning sets. Singing sensation Elizabeth Futral will portray Violetta, Marius Brenciu will be Alfredo and Alan Opie is cast as Germont.

"Opera is about voices," Artistic Director Ian Campbell said, "and there are so many great singers to discover this season."

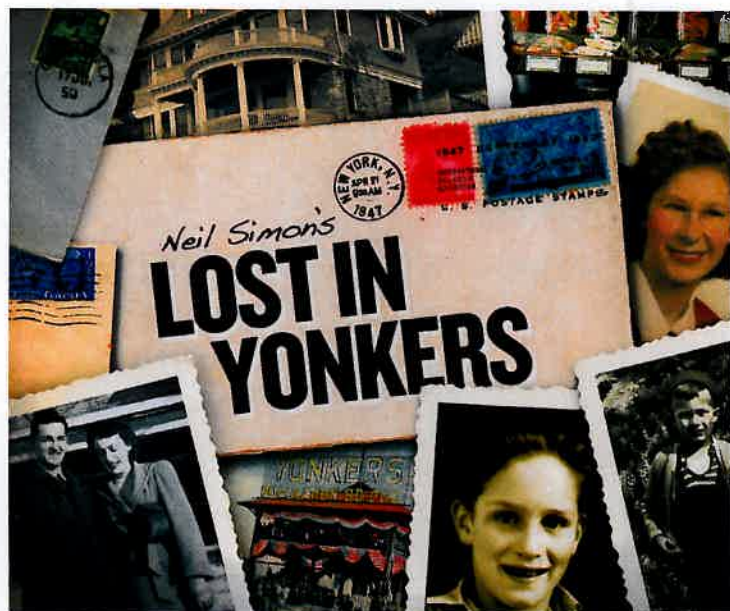
The Old Globe Theatre has a lot to celebrate this month, with the new Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre opening with Neil Simon's Pulitzer and Tony Award-winning "Lost in Yonkers." "Yonkers" has Simon's trademark mix of comic one-liners and drama. The show will open Jan. 23 for a month-long run.

Meanwhile, the Old Globe's main stage will unveil the world premiere of "Whisper House," with music and lyrics by Grammy Award-winning songwriter Duncan Sheik (of "Spring Awakening"). This new musical, set at the height of World War II, will make its debut Jan. 13 and stay ensconced in Balboa Park through Feb. 21.

The North Coast Rep will start the new year with "Glorious," a true story about the worst singer in the world. This hilarious and heartwarming new comedy chronicles the improbable tale of a phenomenally untalented eccentric who became famous for her lack of singing ability and became the toast of New York in the 1940s. "Glorious," directed by Rosina Reynolds, bows in Jan. 13 and will continue to entertain audiences through Feb. 7.

Broadway-San Diego has another pair of offerings at the Civic Theatre this month. The farewell performance tour for the international sensation "Riverdance" is set for Jan. 5-10, and the legendary Ted Neeley repeats his stellar role in the Andrew Lloyd Webber blockbuster "Jesus Christ Superstar" Jan. 15-17. Celebrate "An Evening of Classic Lily Tomlin" at the Balboa Theatre Jan. 28 when Tomlin brings some of her timeless characters to life. On Jan. 24, "Classics 4 Kids" will deliver a "Bringin' It Bach Family

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Courtesy of Broadway-San Diego, a rousing blend of Irish music, song and dance comes to the Civic Jan. 5-10 in the form of "Riverdance" for its farewell engagement.

Concert" at the Balboa.

The San Diego Symphony's January slate is exciting and varied, starting with a Winter Pops Special Jan. 1. This New Year's concert is a Salute to Vienna, with Imre Kollar conducting. The performance showcases the Strauss Symphony of America with dancers from Kiev National Ballet, soprano Ute Ziemer and tenor Joachim Moser on the roster. The Symphony Exposed series will feature a performance of Prokofiev's Symphony No. 5 and bring host Nuvi Mehra onstage to examine Prokofiev's music and individuality.

From Jan. 8-10, the Symphony will feature Maestro Jahja Ling conducting a concert starring Che-Yen Chen on viola and the San Diego Master Chorale. The performances will include works by Rathbun and Williams, as well as Handel's Viola Concerto, but the piece de resistance might just be Prokofiev's Symphony No. 5.

Jan. 15 is Silent Film Night at Winter Pops. Come to see the 1927 film "The General" with organ accompaniment by Russ Peck. The Winter Pops Series will salute the Oscars with "A Night at the Academy Awards" Jan. 22-23. Bill Conti will conduct. The great Itzhak Perlman will give a one-night-only recital Jan. 24. A VIP package will admit aficionados to a pre-recital reception, an intermission dessert event and post-performance champagne backstage with the violin virtuoso. That's an evening not to be missed.

The popular Family Festival returns Jan. 31 with "The Funny Side of Music" conducted by Philip Mann. Youngsters will enjoy this fun-filled event, which includes a musical petting zoo prior to the performance.

The Welk Resort Theatre is winding down its musical version of Dickens' "A Christmas Carol" Jan. 3. Cathy Riggs is headed to the Escondido-based

dinner theater Jan. 7-24 to star in "Steel Magnolias" with Michael Learned. This poignant comedy is part of the Welk's new Celebrity Series and will be followed Jan. 27-30 with Vicki Lawrence and Mama (a "two-woman" show). Lunch and dinner buffets are served prior to performances at the Welk's nearby Canyon Grille.

The San Diego Rep will start the new year with a boom — the hilarious new comedy "Boom." The high-voltage show (described as an "apocalypse WOW") follows a young marine biologist as he prepares for the imminent end of the world. "Boom," which opens Jan. 9 and remains ensconced at the Lyceum Space through Jan. 31, will be directed by Sam Woodhouse, and it's sure to amuse audiences as it flips from madcap humor to sci-fi. This show promises to be a cataclysmic adventure in social satire.

La Jolla Music Society's January roster includes music and dance. The Society's popular piano series will feature Garrick Ohlsson Jan. 15 to open San Diego's Chopin Bicentennial Celebration at Sherwood Auditorium. Dance buffs can look forward to the zany antics of MOMIX Jan. 16 to launch the Society's Dance Series. MOMIX uses magical lighting and visuals to create a fantasy world that will delight audiences of all ages. The performance is slated for the Birch North Park Theatre. Featured in the Discovery Series in January is violist David Aaron Carpenter, who finishes off the month Jan. 31 at the Neurosciences Institute.

The Lamb's Players in Coronado is normally dark this month, but the success of "A Joyful Noise" has prompted the troupe to re-stage the show for a two-week run Jan. 13-27. The play is about the birth of Handel's "Messiah," and the Lamb's recent production was glorious. If you didn't see it last fall, now is your chance!

Mainly Mozart's Spotlight Series is from Jan. 22-24 with performances at three different venues (The Neurosciences Institute, St. Elizabeth Seton and The Inn at Rancho Santa Fe). The concerts feature works by Mozart and other composers. Violinist Frank Huang, cellist Thomas Kraines and pianist Reiko Uchida are guest artists.

Cygnets Theatre will bring the Pulitzer Prize-winning "The Piano Lesson" to the Old Town Theatre Jan. 21-Feb. 28. Delicia Turner Sonnenberg will direct this poignant play by August Wilson.

Junior Theatre will present the delightful "You're a Good Man Charlie Brown" at the Casa del Prado in Balboa Park Jan. 8-24.

The San Diego Natural History Museum recently unveiled the most comprehensive exhibition on the life and work of Charles Darwin, and this is its only West Coast venue. You can take an in-depth look at Darwin's theory of evolution by natural selection any time until the end of February.

The museum's 3D theater will unwrap "Mummies: Secrets of the Pharaohs" through the end of January. The museum also offers "Fossil Mysteries" (from dinosaurs to mammoths) and "Water: A California Story," along with the giant-screen film, "Ocean Oasis."

Birch Aquarium at Scripps brings us a close encounter with seahorses, with more than a dozen species on display. You can even see a special seahorse nursery as part of this unique exhibit. Happily, "There's Something About Seahorses" will be entrenched at the Birch until 2011. A Winter Evening Lecture is set for Jan. 11, when the talk will be "Ocean Observing Oceanography in the 21st Century." ☆