

WHAT TO DO, WHERE TO GO

This week's theatre

■ **Forum** – “A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum” runs at the **Historic Arcade Theatre** through March 16. The zany streets of Ancient Rome come alive in this musical farce, which features some of Stephen Sondheim’s most memorable songs including “Comedy Tonight” and “Everybody Ought to Have a Maid.” Florida Repertory Theatre is located on Bay Street between Jackson and Hendry in the Historic Arcade Theatre in the Fort Myers River District. Subscriptions and single tickets are available through the Box Office (239.332.4488), or visit Florida Rep online at www.floridarep.org

■ **Spamalot** - Monty Python’s **SPAMALOT**, winner of the 2005 Tony Award for Best Musical, hits the **Barbara B. Mann Performing Arts Hall** beginning Tuesday, Feb. 26 for six nights. Monty Python’s SPAMALOT is the outrageous new musical comedy lovingly ripped off from the film classic “Monty Python and The Holy Grail.” Directed by Tony Award-winner Mike Nichols, with a book by Eric Idle and John Du Prez, SPAMALOT tells the tale of King Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table as they embark on their quest for the Holy Grail. Flying cows, killer rabbits, taunting Frenchmen and show-stopping musical numbers are just a few of the reasons audiences everywhere are eating up SPAMALOT. Tickets are on sale at the box office, by calling 481-4849 or online at www.bbmannpah.com.

■ **Moonlight and Magnolias** - **Stage 88 Community Theatre** presents “**Moonlight and Magnolias**” at the Bonita Springs Community Hall through March 8. The comedy by Ron Hutchinson takes place in Hollywood in 1939. Legendary producer David O. Selznick has shut down production of his new epic, *Gone with the Wind*, a film adaptation of Margaret Mitchell’s novel. The screenplay, you see, just doesn’t work. So what’s an all-powerful movie mogul to do? Tickets are \$20 at the door. For reservations call (239) 513-8600 or visit www.Stage88.com for more information.

■ **Material Spirits** - **Theatre Conspiracy**, a Southwest Florida theatre company opens a brand new theatre space on Feb. 21 with the performance of “**Material Spirits**.” Under the direction of Artist Director Bill Taylor, The comedy revolves around a newly divorced woman whose mother and step-mother have very different and spirited views about her future and love life. The show stars Betty Madonna, Pat Clopton, Annie Wagner and Jesse St. Louis. “Material Spirits” won first place in Theatre Conspiracy’s tenth annual new play contest, The Palm Springs International Playwriting Festival and the Ashland (Oregon) New Plays Festival. The new theater is located at 2711 Park Windsor Dr #302, is just north of Southwest Florida Regional Hospital off Evans Ave. It is located in the plaza just behind Sasse’s Restaurant. “Material Spirits” runs through March 15 with performances Wednesdays through Saturdays at 8 p.m. and select Sunday matinees at 2 p.m. Tickets are \$20 or \$10 for students with proper I.D. For tickets or more information Theatre Conspiracy can be reached at (239) 936-3239.

■ **Anything Goes** - Cole Porter’s hit musical “**Anything Goes**” sets sail at the **Broadway Palm Dinner Theatre** beginning Thursday, Feb. 21. The fun filled trip aboard the SS American is packed with Porter classics, lively tap dancing and a boatload of laughs. “Anything Goes” runs through April 5. Performances are Tuesday through Sunday evenings with select matinees. Ticket prices range from \$25 to \$52. Group discounts are available for parties of 20 or more. Tickets are now on sale and can be reserved by calling (239) 278-4422, by visiting www.BroadwayPalm.com, or by stopping by the box office at 1380 Colonial Boulevard in Fort Myers.

■ **The Goat...or who is Sylvia?** - The Naples Players are running the award-winning Edward Albee comedy/drama, “**The Goat...or Who is Sylvia?**” through March 1 at the **Sugden Community Theatre** in Naples. Albee’s play won the 2002 Tony Award as well as a Pulitzer Prize. Reviewers have called “The Goat...” funny, shocking, disturbing, sad and tragic. And also, very literate and entertaining.” This avant-guard, cutting edge production is not for everyone. “The Goat...” takes a controversial look at how we treat those who are outside the norm. Anna Segreto will direct The Naples Players’ production; the cast includes Charles Brown, Erin Laughlin, Brad Goetz and Mikhail Spector. “The Goat...or Who is Sylvia” will be performed in the Tobye Theatre at 8 p.m. Wednesday through Saturday and at 2 p.m. Sunday, from Feb. 6 through March 1. Tickets are \$20, and may be obtained at The Naples Players Box Office, 701 5th Avenue South in downtown Naples, by phone at (239) 434-7340, or online at www.naplesplayers.org.

■ **Monky Business** - The musical comedy “**Monky Business**” is running at the **Off Broadway Palm Dinner Theatre** through March 15. The show features some fun-loving monks who hold a fundraiser to save their monastery. The Monks have a divine plan with plenty of singing, dancing and vaudeville routines. For information and tickets call (239) 278-4422 or online at www.broadwaypalm.com.

■ **Tuxedo Junction** - The cabaret-style revue, “**Tuxedo Junction**” of the swingin’ sounds of the 30s and 40s is on stage now at the **Schoolhouse Theatre** on Sanibel. Performers will get your blood pumpin’ and your hearts thumpin’ to the swingin’est music these incredible decades have to offer. The show will feature jazz vocals and swing dancing by Adam Cooley (You’re a Good Man, Charlie Brown), Kate Phillips (The Holiday Follies), Reid Robinson (Caught in the Net) and newcomer, Mary Elizabeth Milton. The show runs through March 1, Monday through Saturday at 8 p.m. For tickets and information call the box office at 472-6862 or on the Web at www.theschoolhousetheater.com

■ **Cracker at the Ritz** - **Compton & Bennett** bring their satirical hit, “**A Cracker At The Ritz**,” to the **Foulds Theater** at The Alliance for the Arts Thursday, Friday and Saturday, Feb. 21-23 at 8 p.m. Compton & Bennett are Rick Compton and Betsy Bennett. The two have worked together for more than ten years writing, producing and performing in sold-out hits such as “Trouble In Paradise,” “How To Succeed In Naples Without Really Trying” and “The History Of Collier County...According To Us!” Last November, this creative team was seen at Art Royale in their artistic installation: “Word Games.” For more information and to order tickets, visit www.ComptonAndBennett.com or call (800) 838-3006.

■ **Living Blog** - “**The Living Blog**,” a new play written, designed, and directed by Barry Cavin, Chairman of the Department of Visual and Performing at **Florida Gulf Coast University**, is on stage at the Theatre Lab on the campus of FGCU. The play runs Wednesday, Feb. 20 through Saturday, Feb. 23 at 8 p.m. and Sunday, Feb. 24 at 2 p.m. FGCU’s experimental production puts a contemporary spin on the idea of performing news accounts by appropriating the current equivalent of the vital press...the blog. This multi-media, multi-layered performance will take its material from a blogosphere created by the author and other contributors throughout cyberspace. The result will be a five-act play (Scandal, Election, War, Environment, and Apocalypse) with each act corresponding to a blog. The Living Blog promises to be as current, responsive, and controversial as The Living Newspaper was in the 1930s. Tickets are \$10, FGCU Students, faculty and staff \$5 with a valid ID. For information visit www.fgcu.edu/CAS/TheatreLab or call 590-7268.

This week's symphony

■ **The Southwest Florida Symphony**, conducted by Michael Hall, present a special concert to celebrate Concertmaster Reiko Niiya’s 25 years with the symphony at the **Barbara B. Mann Performing Arts Hall** on Friday and Saturday, Feb. 22 and 23 at 8 p.m. The Symphony selected evocative works of Russian influence Full of contrasts, the music is bold, spirited, independent and tender. Concertmaster Reiko Niiya dazzles with Tchaikovsky’s romantic Violin Concerto. Other works include Sibelius’ “Finlandia” and Shostakovich’s “Symphony #5 in D Minor.” For information and tickets call 418-1500 or go to www.swflso.org.

■ **Pops No. 2 Swing! Featuring Ann Hampton Callaway**. The Naples Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by Jack Everly, performs at the **Naples Philharmonic Center for the Arts** Thursday through Sunday, Feb. 21-24. Performances are at 8 p.m. with matinees at 2 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday. Vocal superstar Ann Hampton Callaway joins the orchestra for this swinging program that will include such favorites as *Song of India*, *Begin the Beguine*, *Embraceable You* and much more. For information or tickets call (239) 597-1900 or online at www.thephil.org.

Thursday, Feb. 21

■ **Photography** - Nature photographer **Len Messineo’s Exotic Everglades** program explores the unusual features of this vast, complex system, including the mysterious plant life of a cypress swamp and the effect of fires on the ecology. He will present his dramatic Everglades images at a special lecture starting at 1 p.m. at the “**Ding**” **Darling Education Center**. Admission is free to the event. Seating is limited and available on a first-come basis. For more information, or to become a friend of the refuge, call 472-1100 ext. 241 or log on to www.dingdarlingsociety.org

Friday, Feb. 22

■ **Art** - **The Bob Rauschenberg Gallery** presents “**New Century New Painting: Recent Acquisitions from the Martin Z. Margulies Collection**.” The exhibit opens with a reception from 6 to 8 p.m. The work in this exhibition, produced since the turn of this century, speaks directly to some of the central issues painters are working with today. Imagery, gesture, form, abstraction, representation, pattern and materials are explored in this exhibit and reflect the broad range of ideas being developed by some of today’s premier artists. On loan from the Martin Z. Margulies Collection in Miami Beach, the exhibit includes work by Claire Woods, Bram Bogart, Jonathan Meese, Tal R, Chris Ofili, Karin Davie, Ulf Puder, Oliver Dorfer and others. Gallery hours are Monday-Friday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Saturday, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. For additional information call: 239-489-9313 or visit www.bobRauschenberggallery.com

Saturday, Feb. 23

■ **Art Festival** - **The 29th annual Naples National Art Festival** runs from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. in **Cambier Park** in downtown Naples and will feature 300 artists from 40 states and Canada. This flagship Naples Art Association event brings 35,000 guests downtown to see and purchase the fine art, fine crafts, paintings, oils, watercolors, acrylics, prints, lithographs, photography, sculpture, pottery, glass, jewelry and other original works in this high quality juried art show. Many of the artists are returning favorites, but there are also dozens of artists who are participating in their first Naples Nation-

al. Food vendors and entertainment will be provided. A suggested donation of \$3 benefits education programs at the art center. For more information, call (239) 262-6517 x109.

■ **Art** - Painting, drawing, raku, print-making - whatever the medium, make it a career. It is possible to generate income while pursuing an artistic passion. Join artist Cheryl Jones Evans at the workshop “**Art: Making a Living and a Life**” from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., and explore exciting options available to live life the way you always wanted to. This full day workshop presents artistic and financial life strategies to turn your art into a career. It will be held at the **Alliance for the Arts** on McGregor Blvd. The cost is \$75 for non-members and \$60 for members of the Alliance. Seating is limited, and pre-registration is suggested. Call 239-939-2787 to register.

■ **Mischief Makers** - **Florida Repertory Theatre’s Lunchbox Theatre Series** presents “**The Mischief Makers**” by Lowell Swortzell, a funny and exciting play for children of all ages, at 11 a.m. in the New Brick Bar Theatre at 2226 Bay Street in the Fort Myers River District, and plays March 8, 29, April 19 and May 10. A lesson in world mythology and folklore, “The Mischief Makers” shows audiences what happens when three of the world’s most famous and mischievous characters find themselves mysteriously thrown together on the same totem pole. Tickets to Lunchbox Theatre are \$12, and admission includes the performance, a boxed lunch provided by McAlister’s Deli and an interactive workshop with the actors. Tickets are available through the Florida Rep’s box office at 332-4488. Please do not call the Brick Bar for ticket information.

Sunday, Feb. 24

■ **Theater** - Don’t miss **The Schoolhouse Theater’s 2008 Midway Fundraiser**. It’s a night filled with fun for everyone. Whether you’re a Bingo fan, enjoy the old midway games (Baggo, horse races, pie throwing), want to hear live performances by the “Tuxedo Junction” cast, or are in the mood for a silent auction, this is sure to be a night of non-stop action and entertainment. The Schoolhouse Theater’s Midway Fundraiser will take place at 6 pm at The Sanctuary Golf Club. For tickets and information, please contact Christa at The Sanctuary: 472-6445.

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■ **Symphony** - **The Gulf Coast Symphony** will hold its annual dinner and auction at **Ariani’s Italian Restaurant**, 1529 SE 15th Terrace in the Del Prado Mall in Cape Coral beginning at 6 p.m. The theme is Tuscan Memories. Join the Symphony for gourmet Italian cuisine, Italian Opera, Neopolitan song and a memorable evening of fun. Tickets are \$75 per person. Reservations Required. For information call Gulf Coast Symphony (239) 489-1800. Tickets are available online at www.gulfcoastsymphony.org