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## **THE MORNING LINE**

**DATE:** Wednesday, March 13, 2013

**FROM:** Emily Meagher, Michelle Farabaugh  
Madeline Haurin, Katelyn Levy

**PAGES:** 18, *including this page*

MARCH 12, 2013, 1:16 PM

## Judge Said to Be Frustrated Over Lack of Settlement in 'Spider-Man' Battle

By *PATRICK HEALY*

A federal judge had tough words on Monday for the parties [struggling to reach a settlement](#) over copyright control and profits for the Broadway musical “Spider-Man: Turn Off the Dark” as [the legal wrangling](#) entered a seventh month and a trial date of May 27 loomed.

According to two people who attended the closed-door session with Judge Katherine B. Forrest, of Federal District Court in Manhattan, she expressed frustration that an agreement had not been completed in spite of the parties’ [coming to terms in principle in August](#).

“The judge is pretty fed up,” said one person involved with the lawsuit who was at Monday’s session, and who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss closed-door deliberations. “For months we’ve all been saying we’re a week or two away from a deal, but it still hasn’t happened.” The second person, who declined to be identified by name for the same reasons, said the judge had not set a deadline for a settlement but noted that the trial was set to begin in two months.

The reasons for the long slog are unclear. The lawsuit is primarily between Julie Taymor, the musical’s former director and one of its script writers, and the producers (who fired her from the show in March 2011) and the “Spider-Man” composers, Bono and the Edge of U2; other parties include Marvel Entertainment, which holds the license for the Spider-Man brand. Ms. Taymor initially sued in November 2011 on copyright grounds, saying the producers were making money off her ideas and script and owed her more than \$1 million. The producers then filed their own suit, saying that they had fired Ms. Taymor for breach of contract and that her legal claims were overstated or baseless.

The two people who spoke about Monday’s court proceedings said that Ms. Taymor and the producers had come to terms on money, so the hold-up did not involve her compensation. Rather, the two people said that there were so many parties in the case and interests at stake – such as Bono and the Edge’s copyright protections and share in the royalties, as well as licensing of the show for future productions – that several teams of lawyers were causing the negotiations to become protracted.

“It is a settlement process with a great many layers of people,” said the second person who was in court on Monday.

Rick Miramontez, a spokesman for the lead producers of “Spider-Man,” Michael Cohl and Jeremiah J. Harris, said that the producers had no comment on the session with Judge Forrest. A lawyer for the producers also declined to comment, and a lawyer for Ms. Taymor did not respond to phone messages or e-mail seeking comment.

“Spider-Man,” by far the most expensive musical in the history of Broadway with a budget of at least \$75 million, opened in June 2011 to largely negative reviews after months of preview performances that had been plagued by cast injuries as well as infighting among the creative team before Ms. Taymor’s

dismissal. The show has gone on to be a fan favorite, grossing more than \$1 million a week, though its weekly ticket sales have dipped slightly in recent months. The producers have not announced future productions but are known to be considering venues in London and elsewhere in Europe.

Ms. Taymor, meanwhile, is set to make her first return to New York theater since “Spider-Man”: **She will direct** Shakespeare’s “Midsummer Night’s Dream” this fall for the inaugural production of the new Brooklyn home of Theater for a New Audience, an Off Broadway company.

March 12, 2013

THEATER REVIEW

## At This Movie House, the Drama Is Off Screen

By CHARLES ISHERWOOD

Love, friendship and the daily grind all take on a distinctly sticky quality in “[The Flick](#),” the moving, beautifully acted and challengingly long new play by Annie Baker that opened on Tuesday night at [Playwrights Horizons](#) in Manhattan. Ms. Baker, one of the freshest and most talented dramatists to emerge Off Broadway in the past decade, writes with tenderness and keen insight about the way people make messes of their lives — and the lives of people they care about — and then sink into benumbed impotence, hard pressed to see any way of cleaning things up.

In “The Flick,” directed by Ms. Baker’s frequent collaborator Sam Gold with the customary feathery touch he brings to her work, life’s messy nature takes mild metaphorical form. The three central characters in Ms. Baker’s comedy-drama work in a single-screen (!) movie theater in Worcester County, Mass., realized in grungily acute detail by the set designer David Zinn.

You can practically smell the stale popcorn that the veteran Sam (Matthew Maher) and the newbie Avery (Aaron Clifton Moten) spend their days — and what feels like a full hour of stage time — slowly sweeping into dustpans, row by row. But popcorn is just one of the indignities left behind by the theater’s customers: spilled soda, chewing gum and, well, worse.

Even as the characters rail against the outrageous lack of respect shown by moviegoers, they find their own interpersonal relations getting pretty gummed up as Ms. Baker’s play gently unspools in scenes marked by her usual acute sensitivity to the tangential, minimally verbal (and often subverbal) manner in which people often communicate — or gingerly avoid communicating.

Mr. Maher’s Sam, already into his 30s, takes a modestly paternal attitude toward the new kid on the job, the 20-year-old Avery, who has dropped out of college for a semester after a family trauma. Drawing him out as he walks him through the monotonous routine, Sam discovers that Avery is a film geek with preternatural recall.

His attempts to stump Avery with highly absurd pairings in the parlor game Six Degrees of Kevin Bacon leave him dumbfounded at Avery’s prowess. Pauly Shore and Ian Holm? That’s like two plus two equals four for Avery, whose obsession with movies extends to an ardent belief that digital filmmaking is not just an oxymoron but a cultural scourge. One of the reasons he’s come to work at this seedy theater is because it’s among the last in the state to still use a 35-millimeter projector.

Projection, the loftiest of the jobs at the theater, is the purview of the play’s third principal character, Rose (Louisa Krause). Like both Sam and Avery — and almost all the characters in Ms. Baker’s plays — she’s a bit of a misfit. Her pale, luminous beauty is purposefully clouded by long fronds of green-dyed hair, and she dresses in shapeless black T-shirts that proclaim her alienation from traditional norms of femininity.

Among the many small grudges Sam shares with Avery is Rose’s advancement over him at the theater: Sam

feels he should be up in the booth by now. Worse still, Rose seems completely oblivious to the bone-deep crush Sam has on her (despite the fact that he believes that she's a lesbian). Avery, who greets Sam's confidences with unfailing geniality, finds himself uncomfortably drawn into the unspoken tension between the two when Rose makes an aggressive come-on one night.

Ms. Baker specializes in moments of intimacy that are awkward, hilarious and ineffably touching. Here Rose's blunt attempt to ignite a sexual spark with Avery, as they sit next to each other in the theater's seats, becomes emblematic of the way all three characters remain tone-deaf to one another's yearnings, sensitivities, frustrations. In scenes separated by quick blackouts, we are brought into intimacy with these characters through casual chitchat about the irritations of the workplace, random banter about movies (the persnickety Avery argues forcefully that no work of genius has emerged from Hollywood in the last decade), time-killing conversations about astrology.

Gradually, a sense of the emotional and ethical problems that plague even small lives like these begins to accumulate. In one of the play's most affecting scenes, Avery sits alone in the dark theater, talking to a friend on the phone and exposing his sadness in a way that, despite his clear yearning for friendship, he can never seem to do with Sam.

"Maybe it's never gonna be better," he says. "Maybe I'm gonna live with my dad for the rest of my life and, like, the actual problem is just that I'm waiting for things to change. Like maybe I'm just gonna be that weird depressed guy and I should just, like, accept it. And that'll be the life I get."

That the life we get is not often (if ever) the life we expect is both a commonplace and a sad, fundamental truth. Ms. Baker's peerless aptitude for exploring how people grope their way toward a sense of equanimity, even as they learn to accept disappointment, is among the things that make her such a gifted writer.

And her writing is a great blessing to performers: "The Flick" draws out nakedly truthful and unadorned acting that is a pleasure in itself. Mr. Maher has emerged as a reliably endearing character actor Off Broadway. Here Sam's simmering exasperation at Rose's shrugging indifference strikes notes as funny as they are heartbreaking, and his interactions with Avery are often hilarious.

Ms. Krause nails her character's offhand insensitivity, which she wears with the same casual slouch as she does her goth-lite wardrobe. We come to see how vulnerable Rose is, in her own way, when she finds herself suddenly faced with the possibility of losing her job. To her, as to Sam and Avery, what appears to be a dead-end grind is really a lifeline to the world that none can afford to let slip from their grip without a fierce fight.

But Mr. Moten gives the evening's most revelatory and affecting performance. Moving with the mechanical aspect of an action figure whose batteries are running down, his Avery is a quintessential nerd, right down to the oversize eyeglass frames and the polo shirt buttoned to the top, but one whose quiet rectitude and sweetness are indicated in his every speech. Like many people who lose themselves in art from an early age, Avery will take a longer time than usual to find his bearings in the real world.

For all the delicacy and insight of the writing, the epiphanies certainly take their sweet time coming in "The Flick," which at three hours (with one intermission) runs about as long as your average Shakespeare production. The emotional impact of the events that gradually leave one of the characters feeling alienated from the others is somewhat vitiated by the play's inordinate length. (Ms. Baker's plays ["The Aliens"](#) and

[“Circle Mirror Transformation”](#) achieved equally potent effects at considerably shorter duration.)

And yet if you have any feeling for ordinary people in furtive search of those extraordinary things — required love, true friendship, a sustaining belief in man’s humanity to man — that can ennoble any life (or blight it, should they be lost), this lovingly observed play will sink deep into your consciousness, and probably stay there for a while. Without question “The Flick” requires your patience, but it rewards that patience too, bountifully.

### **The Flick**

By Annie Baker; directed by Sam Gold; sets and costumes by David Zinn; lighting by Jane Cox; sound by Bray Poor; production stage manager, Katrina Herrmann; production manager, Christopher Boll. Presented by Playwrights Horizons, Tim Sanford, artistic director; Leslie Marcus, managing director; Carol Fishman, general manager. At Playwrights Horizons, 416 West 42nd Street, Clinton, (212) 279-4200, [ticketcentral.com](http://ticketcentral.com). Through March 31. Running time: 3 hours.

WITH: Alex Hanna (Skylar/the Dreaming Man), Louisa Krause (Rose), Matthew Maher (Sam) and Aaron Clifton Moten (Avery).

March 12, 2013

THEATER REVIEW

## Down in the Basement, Family Tensions Stir

By CHARLES ISHERWOOD

The streets are aflame with conflict in Dominique Morisseau's play "Detroit '67," but the temperature in the basement recreation room where the action takes place never rises much above a mild simmer. An overly tidy drama that uses the riots that roiled the title city as the background to formulaic stories about a brother and sister at odds and an interracial romance, Ms. Morisseau's play blends sentiment and social history in roughly equal parts, with results that feel studied and disappointingly bland.

The production, presented as part of the [Public Lab](#) series in association with the [Classical Theater of Harlem](#) and the National Black Theater (where it moves after the Public run), evokes the period with vibrant specificity. From the record player, and eventually the eight-track tape player, comes a steady stream of Motown hits: the Temptations, Smokey Robinson and the Miracles, Martha Reeves and the Vandellas, the Four Tops. The costumes, by Esosa, are slick vintage duds that would fetch nice prices on eBay. On the cinder-block walls of the set, by Neil Patel, are photographs of an assortment of celebrated African-American figures, from Malcolm X to Aretha Franklin.

Despite all these vivid signifiers of the 1960s, the blueprint for the play's dramaturgy might almost have been drawn up decades before. Chelle (Michelle Wilson) and Lank (Francois Battiste) have recently inherited their childhood home. They have converted the basement where they played as children into an after-hours club, hoping to bring in some extra money to supplement their modest inheritance. With his best friend, Sly (Brandon J. Dirden), Lank — it's a nickname for Langston — secretly has ambitions to buy a real bar with the money. He knows the more conservative Chelle will put the brakes on his dreams — she has a son at Tuskegee to support — so he keeps his plan under wraps.

Sly and Lank's business negotiations are interrupted when they find a more pressing problem on their hands: driving home one night, they come upon a badly beaten woman stumbling along the street. Nervous about what might result if two black men arrived at the hospital with a disoriented and battered white woman, they bring her home and install her in the basement to recuperate.

Chelle, appalled at their impulsive decision, still helps to nurse the woman, Caroline (Samantha Soule), who somewhat implausibly refuses to say much about who she is or what happened to her. Because Chelle could use some help serving drinks and food at the club, she reluctantly agrees to let Caroline stay — only to regret her decision when she sees Lank and Caroline warming to each other.

With its carefully charted plots and subplots, "Detroit '67," directed by Kwame Kwei-Armah, has the diagrammatic feeling of an extended episode of a 1970s sitcom. Playing the role of the brassy sexpot Bunny, who drops by to make sassy wisecracks, De'Adre Aziza almost seems to be paying loving tribute to the Willona character from "[Good Times](#)," which starred Esther Rolle as the matriarch of a working-class family in Chicago. With her jangling bangles, thigh-high skirts and brash humor, Ms. Aziza's spunky Bunny gives the

play some lively comic relief.

The other actors inhabit their characters with ease, although the writing doesn't give them scope to create fully three-dimensional portraits. As the optimistic Lank, ready to help usher in the new world he sees rising from the ashes, Mr. Battiste exudes a warm likability. Mr. Dirden, recently seen in the superb Signature Theater revival of August Wilson's "[Piano Lesson](#)," brings a spiky seductiveness to the smallish role of Sly.

Caroline, who eventually reveals why she refused to divulge much about her past, is as much a device as a character: a convenient way for Ms. Morisseau to bring the issue of the city's stark racial divide from the streets into the basement. Ms. Soule does her best to give this cipher some flesh-and-blood specificity. In Chelle Ms. Wilson creates a convincing portrait of a woman whose family feeling runs deep but whose loyalty to her son's future ultimately trumps even her deep affection for her brother.

Though the play crackles with humor, Ms. Morisseau's dialogue is less adroit when it comes to the drama's more serious subject matter: the bitterness arising between Chelle and Lank when she learns of his plans to buy the bar. The characters tend to spell out their emotions in neat aphorisms, and repeat them as necessary.

"Life ain't just about keeping what you got," Lank says when Chelle upbraids him for going behind her back to buy the bar. "It's about building something new." (The play's plot, turning on a family dispute over a legacy, owes debts both to "The Piano Lesson" and Lorraine Hansberry's "Raisin in the Sun.")

Later, Chelle confides to Bunny her resentment at Lank's making eyes at Caroline. "I see him look at her, and it makes me feel like we ain't enough," she complains. "Like he sees something better in her than he sees in us. Throw us out like a scratched record. But ain't we got no value?"

"Detroit '67" could actually use some scratches along its too-smooth surfaces. Even after tragedy strikes, you have the sense that all will be resolved with minimal lasting damage: just fire up some Motown, get those hips moving and everything will work out fine.

## **Detroit '67**

By Dominique Morisseau; directed by Kwame Kwei-Armah; sets by Neil Patel; costumes by Esosa; lighting by Colin D. Young; sound by Shane Rettig; production stage manager, Christina Lowe; associate artistic director, Mandy Hackett; associate producer, Maria Goyanes; general manager, Steven Showalter; production executive, Ruth E. Sternberg. A Public Lab production, presented by the Public Theater, Oskar Eustis, artistic director; Patrick Willingham, executive director; in association with the Classical Theater of Harlem and the National Black Theater. Through Sunday at the Public Theater, 425 Lafayette Street, at Astor Place, East Village, (212) 967-7555, [publictheater.org](http://publictheater.org). Reopens on March 23 and runs through April 14 at National Black Theater, 2031 Fifth Avenue, near 125th Street, East Harlem, (866) 811-4111, [classicaltheatreofharlem.org](http://classicaltheatreofharlem.org). Running time: 2 hours 15 minutes.

WITH: De'Adre Aziza (Bunny), Francois Battiste (Lank), Brandon J. Dirden (Sly), Samantha Soule (Caroline) and Michelle Wilson (Chelle).



# The New York Times

MARCH 13, 2013

## Arts, Briefly

Compiled by Dave Itzkoff

### Strong Sales For Play With Hanks

Several new Broadway shows are off to good starts at the box

office, none more so than the **Tom Hanks** vehicle "Lucky Guy," which last week became the rare play to make more than \$1 million for a week of performances.

"Lucky Guy," a bio-drama by the writer and director Nora Ephron about the New York newspaper columnist Mike McAlary, grossed \$1,109,678 for seven preview performances last week (one less than the standard eight), according to ticket sale data released on Monday by the Broadway League of theater owners and producers. "Lucky Guy" was the fourth top-

grossing show for the week behind the musical blockbusters "Wicked," "The Book of Mormon" and "The Lion

King." Two other big-budget musicals, "Cinderella" and "Spider-Man: Turn Off the Dark," were just behind "Lucky Guy" — a reminder that Hollywood stars like Mr. Hanks, above, can be as mighty a draw for theatergoers as brand-name princesses and superheroes.



PATRICK HEALY

# where<sup>®</sup>

MARCH 2013

## ➔ SPOTLIGHT



### Revolting Kids

Children of the world (especially Broadway babies), unite against tyrannical teachers, boorish parents and insipid siblings! For every gifted, intelligent one of you who's ever found escape from the chains of authority in an active fantasy life, ***Matilda The Musical*** (above, p. 23), based on Roald Dahl's deliciously subversive 1988 children's novel that should be required reading for every adult, is the feel-good, wish-fulfillment show for you.

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# where

MARCH 2013

# the where guide



**Entertainment**

WRITTEN AND EDITED BY FRANCIS LEWIS



## The Return of the King

In the 1970s, the musical *Pippin* reigned on Broadway for just under 2,000 performances, winning five 1973 Tony Awards. Fast-forward 40 years to the imaginative new production (*above*) directed by Diane Paulus, who uses a circus motif to help tell the coming-of-age story of the play's titular prince. As one of the show's best-known songs puts it, there's "Magic to Do." Music Box Theatre, 239 W. 45th St., btw Broadway & Eighth Ave., 1.212.239.6200

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# Newsday

MARCH 13, 2013

## theaterbuzz

By Matt Windman  
Special to Newsday

### SJP back onstage

**WHO** Sarah Jessica Parker

**THE DEAL** The "Sex and the City" star is in talks to make her long-delayed return to the New York stage in "The Commons of Pensacola," a new play written by actress Amanda Peet, according to ShowBiz411.com. Although the play would be produced by Manhattan Theatre Club, it's not yet clear whether it would be produced on Broadway or at the company's Off-Broadway space at City Center. Blythe Danner, who is slated to co-star, is currently appearing on Broadway in "Nice Work if You Can Get It" with Parker's husband Matthew Broderick.



PATRICK MCMULLAN.COM PHOTO

Sarah Jessica Parker  
will act in a new play.

Newsday

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# where

MARCH 2013

## ICONIC NEW YORK EXPERIENCES

The stories behind our city's signatures: landmarks rich in tradition, yet remarkably adaptable. **By Terry Trucco**

**CELEBRATED SIGHTS** The most memorable window-shopping moment ever filmed occurs on the corner of Fifth Ave. and 57th St. at 5 a.m., ca. 1961, as Holly Golightly has a diamond-perusing *Breakfast at Tiffany's*. She'd have no trouble recognizing Tiffany & Co. today, nor its sumptuous neighbors, such as Bergdorf Goodman, Saks Fifth Avenue and Chanel. "Waves of retailers

come and go, but the anchors stay," says Tom Cusick, president of the Fifth Avenue Business Improvement District. Those anchors colonized Fifth Avenue in the 1920s-1940s, replacing the millionaires' mansions that once dominated the avenue (you can still see remnants of some of them, now housing boutiques, such as Cartier at the corner of Fifth Ave. and 52nd St.). Today, the **Fifth Avenue Shopping District** (officially, 48th to 61st sts., btw Madison and Sixth aves.) encompasses more than 130 merchants, from plucky locals like toy emporium F.A.O. Schwarz to international luxury purveyors such as Wempe Jewelers to high-tech powerhouses like the Apple Store. Even with rents at \$2,500 a

square foot, empty storefronts are rare. "Fifth Avenue puts a stamp of quality on a business," Cusick says.

Fifth Avenue is just one of the inimitable sights visible from the observatories of the **Empire State Building** (350 Fifth Ave., btw 33rd & 34th sts., 1.212.736.3100), a pretty inimitable sight itself. Small wonder the famed 86th-floor outdoor observation deck and the smaller indoor observatory 200 feet above on the 102nd floor have been a megawatt New York attraction since May 1, 1931, when President Herbert Hoover opened the building by pressing a button in Washington, D.C., that switched on the lights. Though it's no longer the tallest skyscraper in the world (or even in New York), 103 stories, 1,860 steps, 73 elevators and 6,500 windows aren't chump change. The freshly renovated 86th-floor deck now boasts a heated, glass-enclosed gallery, but the opportunity to



Musicals such as *Annie* (with Lilla Crawford in the current revival) span the theatergoing generations.

experience the city outdoors on high is exhilarating, says Observatory Director Jean-Yves Ghazi.

"The wind whips by; you see the clouds, the position of the sun or the stars, the planes approaching the different airports. Not a day is the same." On the climate-controlled 102nd floor, a step at the base of the new energy-saving windows allows visitors to step up and look down, a thrilling effect. "You feel like you're on top of the world," Ghazi says.

As thrilling as standing atop Manhattan is viewing it by ship. While the Statue of Liberty is at press time closed to visitors, you can still get up close and personal with her—along with other harbor landmarks, such as Ellis Island and the Brooklyn Bridge—on a **Statue Cruises** tour (18 State St., 1.201.604.2800), with National Park Service Rangers onboard. For almost 70 years, **Circle Line Sightseeing Cruises** (Pier 83, at W. 42nd St. & 12th Ave., 1.212.563.3200) have circumnavigated the city with their two- and three-hour voyages, down the Hudson River, up the East River and under the George Washington Bridge. "Our ships saw the building up of Manhattan," says Chief Managing Officer Jason Hackett. It all began when three native New Yorkers, fresh from World War II, decided to turn decommissioned Navy ships into sightseeing cruisers. "While stationed in London, they saw the Circle Line tube line; it seemed like a nifty name," Hackett says. Today, Circle Line's state-of-the-art vessels are outfitted with

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heating, air-conditioning and extra-big windows.

Back on terra firma lies **Times Square** (W. 40th to W. 53rd sts., btw Sixth & Eighth aves.), the city's razzle-dazzle, neon-and-LED-fueled entertainment district. By official count, 230 advertising billboards burn bright day and night. They blanket 385,000 square feet in the area, generating \$60 million annually in advertising revenue (small wonder: They're seen by 300,000 to 500,000 people a day). Today's Day-Glo images track back to the first illuminated billboard on the side of a bank at Broadway and W. 46th St. in 1904. "As theaters popped up, people started coming to the area," says Steven Heller, co-author of *Times Square Style: Graphics From the Great White Way* (Princeton Architectural Press, 2004). "Times Square became a good place to advertise, and that's never really changed." Today, zoning regulations call for every building in the district to display illuminated ads. Just before 12 a.m., stop by for Midnight Moment, when every billboard in Times Square displays a synchronized work of art.

**MARQUEE ATTRACTIONS** Times Square is home to the Theater District, a.k.a. Broadway—and while each year brings a fresh array of talent, there are moments when time seems to stand still on the Great White Way. For example, the hot musical of the 1976-77 theater season was *Annie*, based on the Depression-era comic strip "Little Orphan Annie." The hot musical of the 2012-13 season? A revival of *Annie* (Palace Theatre, 1564 Broadway, btw W. 46th & W. 47th sts., 1.877.250.2929). "The new version's got more storytelling and different scenery, but it's the same piece we wrote 30-odd years ago," says show composer Charles Strouse. "Today, it's looked upon as a frothy children's play, but we always meant it to be rather dark. I think it's that darkness that gives the show its substance and longevity." At the same time, with its upbeat anthem "Tomorrow," comic turns and winsome cast of little girls—not to mention Sandy the dog—sunlight abounds. "We always meant it to be a show about hope," Strouse says.

Sounds of hope, darkness and just about everything imaginable have resonated from **Carnegie Hall** (881 Seventh Ave., at W. 57th St., 1.212.247.7800), ever since Peter Ilych Tchaikovsky conducted his Marche Solennelle there on opening night in 1891. "We've had almost 50,000 events," says archivist Gino Francesconi, director of the onsite Rose Museum. "A lot of people know Bernstein and Toscanini performed here, but they might not necessarily know about the Beatles or Benny Goodman or Bruce Springsteen." The hall's mystique as the pinnacle of a performer's success developed early on: Since its 3,000 seats were located in a Siberia-like location far north of 14th Street, the midtown of the 1890s, "to sell out at Carnegie Hall, you had to be good," Francesconi says. Carnegie today encompasses two additional spaces, the intimate Weill Recital Hall and Zankel Hall for jazz and world music. Yet the fabled main auditorium—now named for violinist Isaac Stern and hosting the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra (Mar. 1-3) and the San Francisco Symphony (Mar. 20-21)—looks and sounds much as it did in the 1890s. When you're seated inside, attending a performance, bustling "57th Street seems another world away."

Much that's on view at the **Hayden Planetarium** (American Museum of Natural History, Central Park West, at W. 79th St., 1.212.769.5100) truly is another world away. Consider *Journey to the Stars*, its pulse-racing, 30-minute show: "We have a three-dimensional map with distances of everywhere that astron-

omers have found objects, so we can actually fly you through the universe," says Department of Astrophysics curator Mordecai-Mark Mac Low. The Rose Center for Earth and Space, the planetarium's home since 2000, makes a superb backdrop for cosmic travel. A six-story glass cube, it displays the spectacular Hayden Sphere, a planetlike orb that "occupies the footprint of the old Hayden dome [of the original 1935 planetarium]," Mac Low says. "We just raised it up and made it a full sphere."

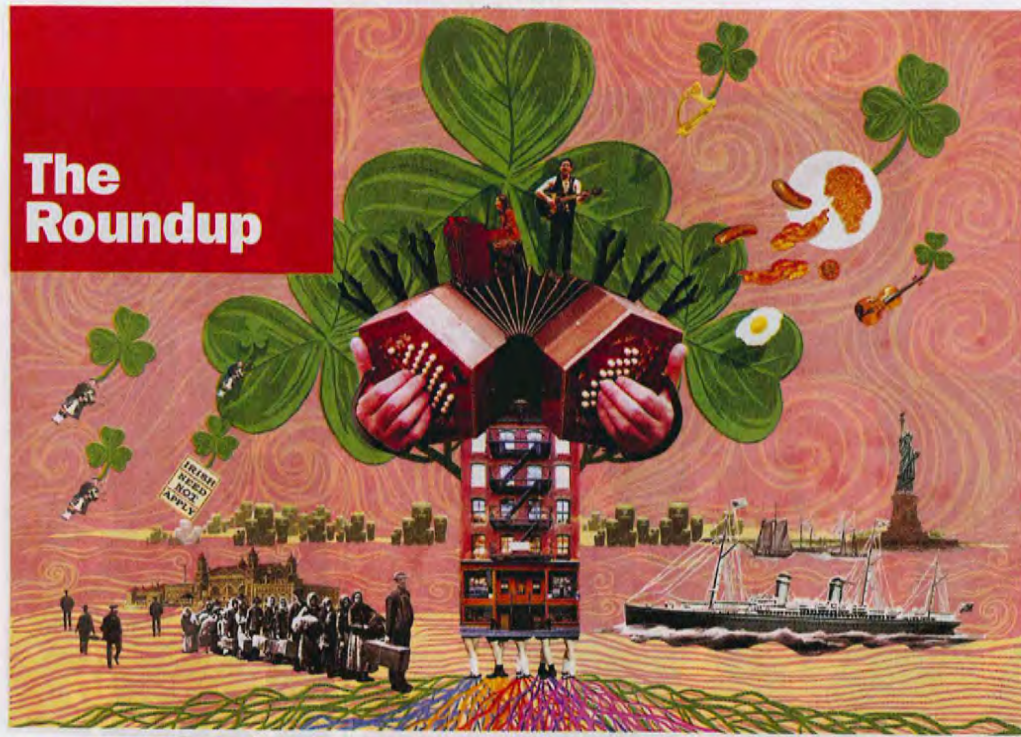
**ICONIC BITES** New York may not have invented cheesecake (the ancient Greeks ate it), but cheesecake was a New York restaurant staple by the early 1900s, refined—as the story goes—by restaurateur Arnold Reuben, of Reuben sandwich fame, into the dense, creamy concoction served in countless delis today. Still, "you have to love cheesecake to eat four or five ounces of it," says celebrity chef David Burke. His solution: the bite-size cheesecake lollipop, served most dramatically in a Cheesecake Lollipop Tree at **David Burke Kitchen** (The James New York, 23 Grand St., btw Thompson St. & Sixth Ave., 1.212.201.9119). Celebrating their 20th anniversary this year, the pops come nestled in toppings like strawberry shortcake and Heath Bar caramel. And, miraculously, they're less caloric than a cake slice (if you stop at two).

If any drink embodies New York, it's the Manhattan, and not just for the obvious reason. Whether the classic version—rye whiskey, sweet vermouth, bitters and a maraschino cherry—or the more popular bourbon-based rendition, it's the city in liquid form: complex, enduring and potent. Both rye and bourbon Manhattans are mixed with frequency and skill at

**The Campbell Apartment** (15 Vanderbilt Ave., btw E. 42nd & E. 43rd sts., 1.212.953.0409), housed in another city icon, Grand Central Terminal. The space was originally the plush Midtown office of financier John W. Campbell. "He built it to resemble a Florentine palazzo," says Mark Grossich, CEO of Hospitality Holdings, whose company tweaked Campbell's vision—and tapped his name—when creating the bar in 1999.

Whether it's a Carnegie Hall concert or a slice of cheesecake, scratch any signature NYC experience, and up pops a snippet of history that endures to enrich life in the present.

March 21–27, 2013



## The Roundup

# The Irish guide to NYC

Sick of the green beer, shamrock-adorned bros and general douchiness that comes with St. Patty's Day? Follow our primer and fete this prominent Gotham demographic like an adult. By **Tim Lowery**

### Culture

The Irish immigrant experience in NYC has been documented in songs (the Pogues' "Fairytale of New York"), films (*In America*) and books (*Angela's Ashes*). But the biggest cultural import at the moment seems to be Irish theater, including Broadway's **Once** (*Bernard B. Jacobs Theatre, 242 W 45th St between Broadway and Eighth Ave; 212-239-6200, [oncemusical.com](http://oncemusical.com); dates vary; \$60–\$157*), based on the smash Dublin-set indie film; Teresa Deevy's '30s drama **Katie Roche** (*Mint Theater Company, 311 W 43rd St between Eighth and Ninth Aves, third floor; 866-811-4111, [minttheater.org](http://minttheater.org); dates vary; \$55*); and **Donnybrook!** (*Irish Repertory*

*Theatre, 132 W 22nd St between Sixth and Seventh Aves; 212-727-2737, [irishrep.org](http://irishrep.org); dates vary; \$55–\$65*), a musical spin on the country's most famous film, *The Quiet Man*. You can listen to non-musical-theater tunes at pubs (like the aforementioned An Beal Bocht), which often encourage impromptu acoustic jams. But for a solid bet, hit the bi-weekly **Blarney Star Concert Series** at NYU's Glucksman Ireland House (*1 Washington Mews between Fifth Ave and University Pl; 212-998-3950, [irelandhouse.fas.nyu.edu](http://irelandhouse.fas.nyu.edu); next event: Mar 22 at 8pm; suggested donation \$15, members and students free*), which showcases Irish folk performers. A friendly tip: Leave those green beads from Sunday at home.

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March 14-20, 2013

**Critics' picks** The five best events this week

**4 Old Hats Pershing Square Signature Center**  
Bill Irwin and David Shiner give us the silent treatment in a delightful comic vaudeville, joined by singer Nellie McKay (see Off Broadway).

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# Star

MARCH 25, 2013

## ★ StarDISH

### STAR SPOTS THE STARS

★ **Lea Michele**, seeing the musical *Once* on Broadway.

Star Magazine

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# B'way tryouts move closer to home

Social media ends the days when shows like 'Honeymoon in Vegas' fine-tuned in the stix.

By Gordon Cox

It used to be that when a Broadway show booked an out-of-town tryout, it actually went out of town.

Not anymore. The world premiere of Rialto-targeted musical "Honeymoon in Vegas" premieres this fall at the Paper Mill Playhouse in Millburn, N.J. — less than a half-hour ride from midtown Gotham — and that proximity marks a major shift in the way commercial producers think about legit creative development in the new media age.

"Ten years ago, we all wanted to go out of town to hide while we worked on our show," said Roy Gabay, a lead commercial producer attached to "Honeymoon" alongside Dena Hammerstein. "With social media the way it is now, there is no hiding."

"Honeymoon in Vegas" is the latest in a string of Broadway titles to bow at Paper Mill, the 75-year-old nonprofit. "Newsies" preemed there in 2011 before strong response prompted Disney Theatrical Prods. to move the show to Broadway. In 2010, the 25th anniversary tour of "Les Miserables" debuted there — in the same staging that producer Cameron Mackintosh recently slated for a Main Stem engagement in 2014.

In the past, Paper Mill had been considered far too close to Gotham to develop new titles, which producers preferred to nurture in some faraway, cloistered city shielded from the industry's prying eyes.

But with Twitter and Facebook now available for local theatergoers to broadcast the moment-by-moment developments of a production, what happens out of town never stays out of town — and Paper Mill is reaping the benefits of the shift.

"The stumbling block for many years was the proximity to New York," said Paper Mill's producing a.d. Mark S. Hoebee. "Now it's done a complete 180, and it's become very attractive."

Producers still take tryouts out of town, of course, such as "Kinky Boots," the incoming Broadway

musical that preemed in Chicago, or "Big Fish," soon to bow in the Windy City before moving to New York later this year.

But as distance becomes less of a compelling factor, Paper Mill can offer other advantages.

At the nearby nonprofit, New York creatives can work on a new show and still live at home, cutting the costs of putting up talent out of town. For a Gotham-based commercial producer, it also becomes a lot easier to swing by to check out a matinee — which can turn into a weekend-long ordeal if a show's in California.

In addition, the proportions of Paper Mill's 1,200-seat venue provide a comparable model for most of the Broadway or road houses a production might encounter in the future, allowing a lot of the design work at Paper Mill to carry over to subsequent incarnations.

Such advantages are all in addition to the nonprofit producing infrastructure Paper Mill — with an annual operating budget of about \$15 million and a subscriber base of more than 19,000 — brings to the table.

As was the case with "Newsies," Paper Mill is the producer of the world premiere of "Honeymoon," enhanced by funds from the attached commercial entities. A brewing project can also benefit from the theater's artistic staff, on hand to help hone a show.

For Paper Mill, the reward is a high-profile production with a recognizable star, adding a little pre-Broadway prestige to the com-

pany's 75th anniversary season.

Tony Danza toplines "Honeymoon in Vegas," the new musical based on the 1992 Castle Rock comedy with a book by film scribe Andrew Bergman and score by Jason Robert Brown ("Parade"). Gary Griffin ("The Color Purple") directs.

Next season, it's not just "Honeymoon" that Gotham legiters are keeping an eye on. According to Hoebee, there's also a commercial producer attached to Off Broadway alum "The Other Josh Cohen," another entry in Paper Mill's 2013-14 season along with productions of "South Pacific," "Grease" and "Oliver!"

"Honeymoon" bows at Paper Mill Sept. 26-Oct. 27, with the details of its future commercial life to be nailed down in the wake of the musical's initial reception.