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THE MORNING LINE

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PAGES: *7, including this page*



The New York Times



March 10, 2016

Neil Patrick Harris's Latest Trick: A Magic-Themed Immersive Theater Project

By Joshua Barone

Neil Patrick Harris is collaborating with the producers behind the immersive theater spectacle "Queen of the Night" on a new, magic-themed nightlife project.

One of those producers, Randy Weiner — whose production credits also include "Sleep No More" and "Natasha, Pierre and the Great Comet of 1812" — said in an interview that the currently untitled project with Mr. Harris's Prediction Productions was in the works, with an opening aimed for the fall. (Mr. Harris will not be performing in the show.)

Mr. Harris has performed magic at a variety of venues, including the Magic Castle in Los Angeles, where he served as president of the board. Mr. Weiner said the collaboration had come about casually. Mr. Harris wanted to work with him on an immersive theater project, he said, and Mr. Weiner reached out when he decided on a magic theme for his next one.

Details are scant but Mr. Weiner did say that the production, which has no opening date, would involve "totally transforming" 311 West 57th Street — which his company, Variety Worldwide, is to lease when the event space Providence leaves it this year. The site is the former home of the nightclub Le Bar Bat.

"Magic is at the core of this venue" for the production, Mr. Weiner said, adding that the space would be made to look like a mansion and that there would be dance, variety acts and one-on-one interactions. As with "Queen of the Night," there will be a meal, which he said would be "an unexpected culinary experience."

Mr. Weiner said he was in the final stages of securing collaborators for set design, choreography and cuisine. Workshops for the production are scheduled to begin this summer.



The New York Times

March 10, 2016

Review: Nathan Lane, You've Got a Part (This Time) in 'White Rabbit Red Rabbit'

By Charles Isherwood

For all I know, as I write these words, Nathan Lane is lying dead on a chaise longue on the stage of the Westside Theater.

Probably not. You would have read the obituary by now. But Mr. Lane, who gave the first New York performance of "White Rabbit Red Rabbit," a playful, enigmatic and haunting solo show by the Iranian writer Nassim Soleimanpour, was lying supine on that chaise when I left the theater as strictly instructed Monday night, the only night of the week the show is being presented. The play concludes with the ominous suggestion that — well, perhaps I shouldn't say any more.

The novelty — or gimmick, or both — of "White Rabbit" is that the actor performing the show does not have a chance to read it before arriving at the theater. He (or she) is handed the script onstage, before us, with no prior knowledge of its contents (unless, of course, he or she has already Googled it and got a general sense of what is in store). Every week, a different actor will perform the 75-minute piece. The list of upcoming performers, a diverse and distinguished lot, includes Whoopi Goldberg, Patrick Wilson, Brian Dennehy and Cynthia Nixon. (Check the show's website to see who is performing when.)

Mr. Lane, I am tempted to say, could hardly be bettered. Mr. Soleimanpour's play allows for interpolations and ad-libs from the actor performing it (Mr. Lane raised his hand when he was departing from the text) and nobody but nobody has a quicker wit and a more deft ability to joust merrily with the audience than he does. When handed a mysterious vial of powder at the start, he quipped, "It's the '80s again!"

After a reference to audience participation — a not insignificant element — he joked that this was, for him, a blight on the world somewhere between incest and folk-dancing. And perhaps the only tedious passage of the show comes up front, when the audience is counted, or rather counts itself, one by one; thank God, I cracked to myself, aping Mr. Lane, we were not in the voluminous Gershwin Theater. (A tip for those who share Mr. Lane's aversion: Most of the people conscripted for larger roles came from the first couple of rows, or participated voluntarily.)

I thought for a few minutes that Mr. Lane might hijack Mr. Soleimanpour's play entirely and treat us to a Nathan Lane show, and who would complain? But Mr. Lane is also a dedicated and serious actor, great funnyman though he is, and he honored the playwright's words dutifully (if, yes, continuing to add his own marvelous asides here and there).

Reviewers have been admonished not to give away much about what transpires during these 75 minutes, so my hands are tied, to a certain degree. Maybe this is appropriate, since the play comments implicitly on the

strictures that all artists — indeed, all citizens — in Iran and other authoritarian states must confront and negotiate on a daily basis.

Authoritarian regimes do not allow for freedom of artistic expression, of course. So among the shivery aspects of the play is the ghostly presence of the writer — absent and present, simultaneously — and ever in danger of being silenced, whether by the oppression of the country's rulers or, more darkly, the anguish and despair that this can induce. (The program notes that by the time Mr. Soleimanpour was allowed to travel outside Iran, in 2013, "White Rabbit," his first play, had been performed more than 200 times in 15 languages.)

The play also addresses obliquely — and you soon become aware that writers living in repressive cultures must cloak their ideas in symbols — the oppression of women in some Muslim nations; the alienation that living in such cultures can engender; and the universal human tendency to obey authority, whether it's the laws under which people must live, or the text and directions an actor (or an audience member) has just been handed and told to perform.

Among the things I will say is that the actor performing the play is required to portray one animal playing another (no, not a rabbit), and that the play is a conversation among playwright, performer and audience, a conversation that, for all its diverting humor, takes on a gravity that prickles your skin when we are reminded that the author might not have the freedom to even see the performance we are watching. Exhortations to send him an email (we are given the address) enhance the sense of his disconnection from the wider world.

The title in fact refers to an experiment supposedly performed by the writer's uncle, in which hungry rabbits had to compete for a lone carrot. This was another metaphor, to be read in any number of ways, for the brutality and divisiveness that living under an authoritarian regime may induce, but more broadly a general comment on human behavior.

I'll admit that I got a bit perplexed during the extensive discussion of the white rabbits and the red rabbits. Some other passages slide perilously close to pretentiousness, and much is shrouded in obscurity and frisky quirkiness. But Mr. Soleimanpour's elliptical play keeps taking odd, unexpected turns that often lead us back to the relief of laughter.

Any worthy theatrical experience is, on some level, a dive down into a rabbit hole, where the destination is unknown, even if we know the play well. The distinction of "White Rabbit Red Rabbit" is that the performer moves right alongside us on the journey.

White Rabbit Red Rabbit By Nassim Soleimanpour; performed by Nathan Lane; stage managers, Alexander Crawford and Logan Reed; general manager, Cheryl Dennis; producing associate, Sally Cade Holmes; creative associate, Srda Vasiljevic; dramaturgy, Daniel Brooks and Ross Manson. Presented by Maberry Theatricals, Devlin Elliott and Tom Kirdahy, in association with Aurora Nova Productions and Boatrocker Entertainment. Mondays at the Westside Theater, 407 West 43rd Street, 212-239-6200, whiterabbitredrabbit.com. Running time: 1 hour 15 minutes.

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VARIETY

March 9, 2016

‘Daredevil’ Star Charlie Cox Cast in Off Broadway Play ‘Incognito’

By Gordon Cox



MARCH 9, 2016 | 09:00AM PT

ERIC CHARBONNEAU/REX/SHUTTERSTOCK

[Charlie Cox](#), who plays the titular lawyer-vigilante in Netflix’s Marvel series “[Daredevil](#),” will star alongside Heather Lind (of AMC series “Turn”) in [Manhattan Theater Club](#)’s Off Broadway production of “Incognito” by [Nick Payne](#).

Last season MTC had notable success on Broadway with another play by Payne, “Constellations,” which starred Jake Gyllenhaal and Ruth Wilson. “Incognito” makes its American premiere in May at MTC following a 2014 bow at the Bush Theater in London.

Cox, who’ll star in “Incognito” fresh of [the second season of “Daredevil”](#) that debuts later this month, will star with Lind in the play’s interwoven stories of memory and identity, involving a man who steals Einstein’s brain, a woman beginning a romance with another woman and a man who forgets everything but his love for his girlfriend.

Doug Hughes (“Doubt”) directs the show, for which further casting remains to be announced. “Incognito” rounds out a season at MTC that has included “Fool for Love” with Sam Rockwell and “Our Mother’s Brief Affair” with Linda Lavin on Broadway, as well as new plays from John Patrick Shanley (“Prodigal Son”) and David Lindsay-Abaire (“Ripcord”) in its Off Broadway spaces.

“Incognito” begins preview May 3 ahead of a May 24 opening at New York City Center Stage I.

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THE
Hollywood
REPORTER

March 9, 2016

'Daredevil' Star Charlie Cox Joins Nick Payne's Play 'Incognito'
The star of the Netflix series will be joined by 'Turn: Washington Spies' actress Heather Lind in the Manhattan Theatre Club production.

By Ashley Lee



Charlie Cox
Michael Tullberg/Getty Images

Charlie Cox is headed to the stage.

The star of Netflix's *Daredevil* series has joined the cast of Nick Payne's new play *Incognito*, Manhattan Theatre Club announced on Wednesday. Heather Lind, of AMC's *Turn: Washington's Spies*, has also joined the production, which will be directed by Doug Hughes.

The limited engagement of *Incognito* will begin previews on May 3 ahead of its May 24 opening at New York City Center – Stage I. Additional casting will be announced in the coming weeks.

The new work from Payne — who also wrote last season's Broadway hit *Constellations* that starred Ruth Wilson and Jake Gyllenhaal — follows a pathologist who steals the brain of Albert Einstein; a neuropsychologist who embarks on her first romance with another woman; and a seizure patient who forgets everything but how much he loves his girlfriend.

Incognito braids these mysterious stories into a drama that asks whether memory and identity are nothing but illusions. The play will mark Cox's New York stage debut.

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Billboard

March 10, 2016

Cast Albums For The Week of March 19

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