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THE MORNING LINE

DATE: Monday, August 24, 2015

FROM: Michelle Farabaugh, Melissa Cohen, Jennie Mamary
Zoe Edelman

PAGES: 10, *including this page.*

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The New York Times

August 24, 2015

Arts, Briefly

Forest Whitaker Will Make Broadway Debut

By Michael Paulson

Forest Whitaker, the Academy Award winning film star, will make his Broadway debut next spring in a revival of “Hughie,” a short play by Eugene O’Neill. Mr. Whitaker, who won an Oscar for playing Idi Amin in “The Last King of Scotland,” will play Erie Smith, a hustler who confides in a hotel night clerk. The play, set in Manhattan in 1928, was written in the 1940s but was not staged on Broadway until 1964, when Jason Robards played Erie Smith; a 1975 revival starred Ben Gazzara and a 1996 revival starred Al Pacino. This new revival will be directed by Michael Grandage, the former artistic director of the Donmar Warehouse in London, who won a 2010 Tony Award for his direction of “Red.” The “Hughie” revival will be produced by Darren Bagert along with the Michael Grandage Company and the Shubert Organization. The producers did not announce a date or theater for the opening, but said it would be next spring at a Shubert theater and would have a limited run.



The New York Times



August 24, 2015

La MaMa to Open New Theater

By Andrew R. Chow

La MaMa, an experimental performing arts space in the East Village, will open a new venue called The Downstairs in November. The Downstairs is La MaMa's fourth theater, and will be at the same address as the group's Ellen Stewart Theater.

The venue will contain a 150-seat theater, an exhibition space and a classroom, and will emphasize new media and multidisciplinary work. Its opening is part of a larger \$30 million renovation and restoration.

"We are embracing 21st-century tools for collaboration and production," the artistic director Mia Yoo said in a statement.

The theater will open with a Japanese-style puppet show, "Shank's Mare," on Nov. 6, as part of La MaMa's monthlong Puppet Series.

The Downstairs will be open to the public for viewing on the evening of Sept. 28. Additional information can be found at www.lamama.org.

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Arts & Leisure

The New York Times

August 22, 2015

Fair-Minded or Wishy-Washy? You Choose

Anna Ziegler's dramas view situations from multiple angles.

By ALEXIS SOLOSKI

The playwright Anna Ziegler is not exactly decisive.

On a recent afternoon in a Midtown rehearsal room, while three actors and the director Margot Bordelon worked on her new drama, "A Delicate Ship," Ms. Ziegler temporized and mitigated and side-stepped.

Asked how she felt about a line change, she said it was hard to tell. Consulted on whether a bit of business worked, she said, "I'm just not totally sure."

When the actor Nick Westrate wondered

burgh will both present her tennis play, "The Last Match," while Theater J in Washington will produce "Another Way Home."

And in London, the director Michael Grandage and the actress Nicole Kidman chose Ms. Ziegler's "Photograph 51" for Ms. Kidman's return to the stage, her first play since she astonished critics and audiences in 1998's "The Blue Room." (She'll wear rather more clothes in this one.) It begins performances on Sept. 5.

Despite her rehearsal room ambivalence, Ms. Ziegler is neither weak-willed nor wishy-washy. Rather, she is fair-minded and philosophical, able to look at a situation from multiple angles, reluctant to prefer one argument when she can see the



how he should play a speech, Ms. Bordelon turned to her. "Anna," she said, "do you think he's on a tear there?"

"I guess so," Ms. Ziegler said. "I don't know."

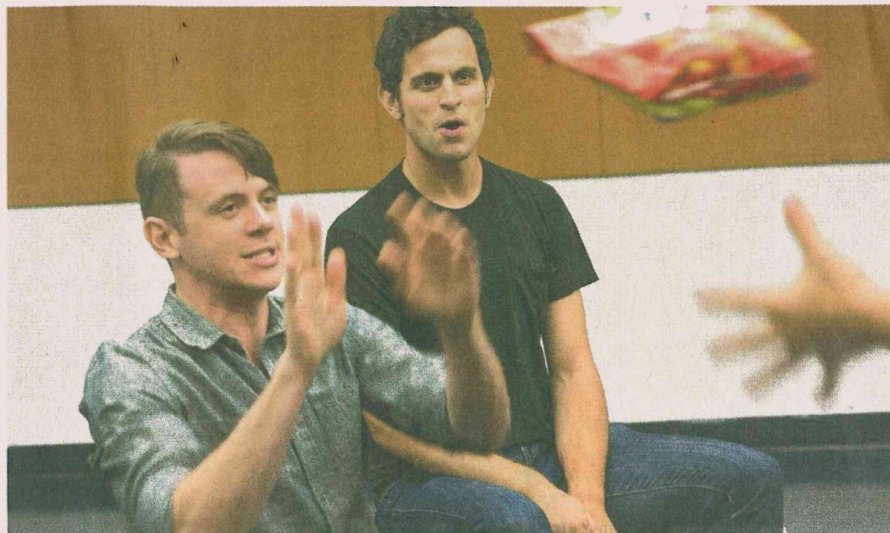
"Anna feels very mixed," Mr. Westrate said.

But theaters this coming season do not feel mixed about Ms. Ziegler. The Playwrights Realm production of "A Delicate Ship" opens on Thursday at the Peter Jay Sharp Theater. Another new play, "Boy," will have its premiere at the Keen Company in February. The Old Globe in San Diego and the City Theater Company in Pitts-

burgh in another. Every play that she writes toys with the audience's sympathies. You feel acutely for a character in one scene and then champion that character's antagonist in the next.

"Nothing and no one is just one thing," says the title character in her early play, "The Minotaur." Ms. Ziegler believes this firmly. In "The Last Match," she suggests the Judy Collins song "Both Sides Now" to introduce a scene. It could be her theme song.

"Anna has a very bittersweet philosophical outlook," said Lindsay Firman, who directed the world premiere of "Photograph



PHOTOGRAPHS BY SARA KRULWICH/THE NEW YORK TIMES

Her characters 'are really trying to do their best.'

51" at Ensemble Studio Theater and will direct "Boy" this winter. "Beauty and humor, beauty and sadness, those things are just really intertwined in her worldview and in her plays."

Ms. Ziegler, 35, lives with her husband, Will Miller, a lawyer, and their 2-year-old son in Cobble Hill, Brooklyn, a few blocks from where she grew up. After majoring in English at Yale, she earned a master's degree in poetry from the University of East Anglia in England, but she had already started to wonder if she would rather be a playwright. She began graduate school in dramatic writing at N.Y.U. just after she returned from England.

In person, Ms. Ziegler is polite and soft-spoken, with rectangular red glasses and a smile that can turn endearingly goofy when something really delights her. At lunch, at a Greek restaurant near the theater, she ordered a grilled chicken breast with minimal hesitation and seemed pleased about it. "I was really decisive just now, wasn't I?" she said.

"Photograph 51" and "Boy" are explicitly concerned with medical ethics. But all her plays explore ethical issues of one kind or another, the duties we owe to ourselves and to each other. They are filled with characters, like the young professionals of "A Delicate Ship," who are trying to behave well and only sometimes succeeding. "I have a lot of sympathy for my characters," she said. "The people I write are people who are really trying to do their best."

Asked if this jibed with her view of the real world, she said: "I guess I do believe that most people are sort of well intentioned. And yet enormous mistakes occur anyway and we have to live our lives knowing that."

Her plays don't necessarily try to fix that, she said, but she does hope that people seeing her work might "feel some empathy or sympathy for someone who has done a wrong thing or a bad thing and then translate that into their own lives in some way." Maybe those spectators can then "be

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12

Fair-Minded or Wishy-Washy?

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

a little gentler with themselves, too.”

Because actions and outcomes interest her greatly, her plays often whirl forward and backward in time, allowing characters to reflect on their choices.

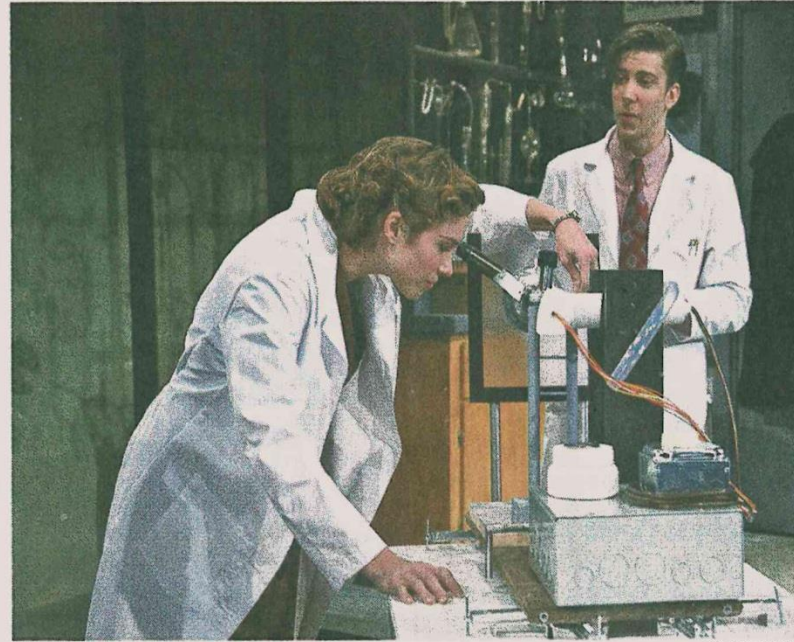
“A Delicate Ship” occupies an hour or two on a Christmas Eve in Brooklyn. Mr. Westrate’s volatile, depressive Nate, a schoolteacher, interrupts an intimate evening between a social worker, Sarah (Miriam Silverman), and her new boyfriend, Sam (Matt Dellapina), a musician and amateur philosopher. But the characters sometimes step out of that time, considering events that are now long past. “Time is not quite as linear as we like to believe,” Ms. Ziegler said. “Theater is a good place to explore that.”

Almost all her scripts have characters who speak to the audience directly, often in heightened, lyrical language — a holdover from all those poetry classes. But she tries to temper this stylization with humor. She has heard from theaters and agents that direct address and poetry don’t sell, and so far major New York theaters have declined to produce her work. But she doesn’t seem bothered, and in terms of style at least, she won’t be swayed. “A Delicate Ship,” she said, is even more “overtly poetic.”

There’s poetry, too, in “Photograph 51,” about the race to discover the structure of

Exploring the idea that ‘time is not quite as linear as we like to believe.’

DNA in the 1950s and the scientists enthralled with the beauty of a molecular world. That beauty has enthralled her, too. The script focuses on Rosalind Franklin, the role that Ms. Kidman will play, an English scientist whose work on the helical structure of DNA, shared with other scientists under dubious circumstances, allowed James Watson and Francis Crick to



GERRY GOODSTEIN

Kristen Bush and David Gelles in “Photograph 51” in 2010 at the Ensemble Studio Theater.

build their successful model.

Ms. Ziegler had never heard of Ms. Franklin before a small Maryland theater commissioned what would become “Photograph 51.” But she soon became fascinated by “her strength of character and independence and perfectionism.” (In other words, she was very decisive.) While the play explores the injustices, major and minor, that Ms. Franklin suffered at the hands of her scientific colleagues, “she didn’t think of herself as a victim and I don’t think of her as a victim,” Ms. Ziegler said.

Certainly, it was the character’s strength that attracted Mr. Grandage and Ms. Kidman. Mr. Grandage immediately identified it as “an amazing leading part for a woman,” while also responding to the play’s structure, which he described as “a kind of thriller, really.”

Ms. Kidman felt drawn to Ms. Franklin

because her father, a biochemist who died last year, was fascinated by her. “I think on some level I took this on for him,” she wrote in an email. She has come to admire the Franklin of “Photograph 51” as “a naturalist, a woman of pure integrity, someone who felt her contribution to the world was more important than personal glory.”

Ms. Ziegler, who had just returned from a week of rehearsals in London, described Ms. Kidman as generous and collaborative, “not trying to make herself any different from anyone else.” Still, she admitted, “I’m totally intimidated by her.”

Meeting Ms. Kidman, an Oscar winner, has made Ms. Ziegler think a lot about “star power,” she said, whether one is born with it or if that quality is “acquired through the act of becoming a star.”

Ms. Ziegler deliberated about it for a while. “It’s probably both,” she finally said.



The New York Times

August 22, 2015

Review: 'Pericles,' Lashed by Sorrows, at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival

By Charles Isherwood

ASHLAND, Ore. — Even among the beleaguered heroes and heroines of Shakespeare's late romances, the title character of "Pericles" stands out for the weight of strange misfortunes that chase him around the Mediterranean, and more than once dump him in it when the ships he's traveling aboard founder. (A favorite stage direction: "Enter Pericles, wet.")

He's forced to flee his home country, Tyre, after he divines the secret of the temperamental ruler of Antioch — namely that he has been sleeping with his own daughter — and fears violent retribution. Later blows include the deaths of his wife and his daughter, although this being a romance, those disasters ultimately prove to be illusions.

In a new production of the play at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, directed by Joseph Haj, Pericles' trials are given a glossy sheen that soothes the impact of his reversals — for us, at least, if not for him. Mr. Haj, recently appointed the artistic director of the Guthrie Theater in Minneapolis, stages this tumultuous play on a clean-lined, simple set by Jan Chambers, featuring tiers of stone cut in contrasting shapes that suggest waves lapping at a shore, or maybe the sharp jabs of fate that Pericles faces. (The production will travel to the Folger Theater in Washington and the Guthrie.)

Francesca Talenti provides animated video projections at the back of the stage that feature swirling celestial images suggestive of "the music of the spheres" (a phrase in the play), and Jack Herrick has composed elegant music for the play's many transitions between locales. (Three musicians seated in a corner of the stage perform live.) Several passages have been modestly rewritten or tweaked and set to Mr. Herrick's compositions. He has also provided new songs, some of them derived from Shakespeare (Sonnet 154 is interpolated and sung), and others with original lyrics.

Some of these additions are more suitable than others: "The Traveler," a song that opens the fourth act after more than a dozen years have passed, features a refrain that might have been lifted from a 1960s folk song:

So leave a light for the traveler

Coming home

Let it shine let it shine

Been a long time gone

It arrives at a crucial point in the play, as the tone moves from thorny tragedy to comedy and ultimately to the traditional scene of rediscovery and reconciliation. The production, presided over by a gray-haired, gentle-voiced Armando Durán as the narrator, Gower, gains a nice energy lift in the scenes set in Mytilene. There, Pericles' daughter, Marina (Jennie Greenberry), now grown, has been sold by pirates (long story) to the owners of a thriving brothel, Pandar (Scott Ripley), and his wife, generically called Bawd (Michael J. Hume).

Mr. Hume, sporting a blooming bosom and a tattered blond wig, digs into this ripe comic role with ferocious gusto. Mr. Ripley, playing the junior partner in this enterprise, likewise delights as the brothel's business begins to dwindle, and Pandar and his wife grow increasingly desperate. Marina's purity and eloquent defense of her virginity, enacted with grave simplicity by Ms. Greenberry, sends customers fleeing, abashed at their depravity. Lysimachus (Michael Gabriel Goodfriend), the governor of Mytilene himself, is simultaneously deterred and bewitched, turned from potential customer to Marina's moral champion in a trice.

Wayne T. Carr, who plays the titular put-upon prince, does a remarkable job of differentiating the Pericles we meet in the first acts, ablaze with fortitude even as those blows rain down upon him, and the defeated man — immobile as a statue, his hair gone gray, hugging a cloak around him as if it were a death shroud — we glimpse in the final act.

Only when Marina is brought to draw out Pericles does Mr. Carr show a man immured in his own grief gradually awakening to life. He persuasively enacts Pericles' initial gruff disbelief's softening into acceptance, and finally awe-struck gratitude, as he discovers in this unknown maid the daughter he has thought long dead.

There follows, of course, more good fortune as the reunited father and daughter travel to the temple of Diana and discover Pericles' wife, Thaisa (Brooke Parks, nicely doubling as this innocent character and the murderous queen Dionyza), who has become a votary there. But it is the moving image of a daughter giving new birth to her own father that strikes the heart most deeply.

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DAILY NEWS

August 23, 2015

'MAMMA'S' BOY

Brent Black has had ABBA-solutely fabulous run as show's last original actor

BY JOE DZIEMIANOWICZ
THEATER CRITIC

Mamma Mia! He's belted ABBA nonstop for 14 years!

No wonder actor Brent Black admits he "could probably go without hearing 'Dancing Queen' for a little while."

At Broadway's long-running "Mamma Mia!" — which sings its final "Waterloo" Sept. 12 — Black's the only actor who's been with the show since Day One. It started previews Oct. 5, 2001.

"It's been a very happy, very long run," says Black, who's in his 50s.

And a steady, well-paying one, even if he hasn't been pulling in a star salary.

"I'm proud to be able to say that I have made a living," he says. "The show has helped afford me and my husband a chance to raise our son."

Family is key to the fluffball ABBA jukebox musical that spins around about a bride-to-be's search for her birth father. Black is on stage in one of four roles. Usually it's a Greek villager. No name. No lines. Just a fishnet tank top.

But the actor could also be Father Alexandrios, who has a couple of lines. Or one of the bride's possible dads, Bill and Sam. Both characters have juicy songs, plus snug Technicolor jumpsuits and codpieces for the "megamix" finale.

"It's amazing," Black says, "how many people ask if they can touch your codpiece when you're collecting money for Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS."

It's amazing, too, that Black hasn't been replaced by another performer who can do the role less expensively. That's showbiz — and the way Broadway works.

Executive producer Nina Lannan says that the "age elasticity" of Black's roles is one reason he's stayed put. Another is his versatility.

"What we found in Brent is someone who can bring the energetic youthfulness so essential to the show as well as a maturity in the principal roles," Lannan says. "It's a valuable combination."

By Black's own estimate, he's played Bill more than 150 times; Sam, about 250; the priest, 300; and the villager, upwards of 5,000.

"There's nothing like singing at center stage," says Black, adding that going back to the ensemble after covering a lead is tough. "But you suck it up," he says.

The musical will have played 5,773 performances when all is said and sung on Sept. 12. Not bad for a show that got tepid reviews and premiered in New York in a time of sobering uncertainty.

"We were the first show to open after 9/11," says Black. "It was pretty intense. We didn't know what was going to happen." To date the show has grossed "Money, Money, Money" to the tune of nearly \$840 million.

Black gets a heads-up on the role he'll be playing that evening or afternoon 2½

Brent Black is a true long-running hit, performing as "Mamma Mia's" iron man since the jukebox musical opened in 2001.



hours before showtime.

That stay-on-your-toes uncertainty helps keep boredom at bay, says Black, who lives on the Upper West Side with husband John Sahs, a psychiatrist, and their 11-year-old son, Jack.

Black's 14-year run has been filled with moments. The happiest: Seeing Jack, then 4, delightedly cheer his performance as Bill.

The weirdest: Seeing a couple in the front row "aggressively" make out.

The loveliest: Reading Meryl Streep's letter to the cast after she came to the show. "It was years before she did the movie," he says. "And she came back."

Black is still figuring what's next for him when the show closes. And he's okay with that. But he wants a role of his own — and to never see a fishnet tank top again. "I'm surprised," he says, "that I don't have permanent waffle-like marks on my skin."

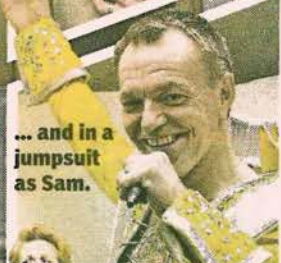
jdziemianowicz@nydailynews.com

THE SWEDE LIFE
Black learns which role he'll play hours before showtime.

Black as Bill, one of the show's possible dads



Black as Father Alexandrios ...



... and in a jumpsuit as Sam.



Black as villager, sadly, has no lines.

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NEW YORK

August 24-September 6, 2015

THE APPROVAL MATRIX *Our deliberately oversimplified guide to who falls where on our taste hierarchies.*

HIGHBROW



ISIS **beheaded** 82-year-old antiquities expert Khalid al-Asaad in Syria after he refused to give up the location of valuable artifacts.



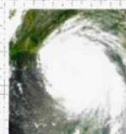
Potheads on Twitter who think that since new evidence suggests that **Shakespeare smoked weed** and they do too, then ... what, exactly?



Hanna Liden's **big-bagel folly**, *Everything*, in Hudson River Park.



Annie Baker's latest carefully observed play, *John*, gets a lift from the **marvelously dippy** Georgia Engel.



The spirit of New Orleans, ten years after **Katrina** almost destroyed it.



Mike Huckabee defended Paraguay's decision to **deny an abortion** to a 10-year-old who was raped by her stepfather.

The "**purposeful Darwinism**" of Amazon corporate culture, according to the *Times* ...



No, seriously, someone has to pay for **new train tunnels** under the Hudson.



Martin Scorsese to make **The Devil in the White City** into a movie.



After a year and a half on Broadway, **Hedwig** is officially more famous than Tommy Gnosis!



Politico apparently **fires** its own labor reporter, who was trying to unionize his fellow staffers.

... If Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos wants to avoid its being "a soulless, dystopian workplace where no fun is had and no laughter heard," maybe it's time to enforce those **employee-laughter benchmarks**.



Topless Times Square tourist-bait tarts as mayoral crisis ...



The cover of Haruki Murakami's advice book features a **cat eating a doughnut** and a goat holding a record.

Can Seth Meyers be the new **Jon Stewart**?



Artist Jason Polan's seven-year project to sketch **Every Person in New York** (volume one, out now).



Betty Buckley as Big Edie in the revival of *Grey Gardens* in Sag Harbor. (Long ago, **actual eccentrics** lived in the Hamptons!)

DESPICABLE



Morrissey, who is likely quite **white inside**, tells Larry King that President Obama is, to his mind, "probably ... white inside."



Fat Water—"a disruptive technology for beverages"—saves you from having to add butter to your water.



Madame Tussauds Las Vegas depicts Nicki Minaj on all fours, is **shocked** by the lewd photo poses it inspires.

... And in response, **shirtless** Pat Kiernan! If this doesn't get him that *Today* gig, nothing will.



Pastis, that **stage set** for touristic notions of swanky brunch, is officially returning to the Meatpacking District.



Craig Robinson, **rapping teacher**, on his sitcom *Mr. Robinson*.



Saks Fifth Avenue to sell an **Empire clothing line**.



East Village community board votes to **block gay sleaze institution the Cock** from moving to another horny location in the nabe.



Insufficiently stoned people who go and steal mile-420 highway markers.



Okilly Dokilly is the name of a metal band that dresses like **Ned Flanders** from *The Simpsons*.

Venti vino! Starbucks to put the "bar" in barista by selling booze ...



A **suicidal Christian Louboutin heel** disabled the escalator at Condé Nast HQ.



FKA Twigs's newest **singular single**, "In Time."

If American Apparel goes bust, then what of lasting **cultural value** did the aughts leave us?



A plague of **super-lice** resistant to most medication has spread to 25 states.

Adultery-enabling website Ashley Madison's user data gets hacked. (Sorry, Josh Duggar.) And to think you **trusted** that website. And then it turned out to be just like all the others.



Nobody expects a contestant on *Bachelor in Paradise* to be a **virtuous** person. But Joe hits a new low.

The female rap supergroup **W.W.A.'s** defiant "Straight Outta Chicago."



... also will make Pumpkin Spice Lattes out of **actual pumpkin** for the first time. Basic bitches, respect!



The Patrick Stewart-Conan O'Brien **kiss**.

LOWBROW

BRILLIANT

PHOTOGRAPHS: MORRISSEY (ENGL); JEFF SCHWALTZ/INASA/GSFC/WIKICOMMONS (KATRINA); PATRICK MCMULLAN (SCORSESE, HUCKABEE); JOAN MARCUS (HEDWIG); LENNY STUCKER/COURTESY OF RAY STREET THEATER (GREY GARDENS); VIVIAN ZINK/COURTESY OF NBC ROBINSON; KTURBEL/INSTAGRAM (LOUBOUTIN); EVAN SWIGART/WIKICOMMONS (PUMPKIN); DAVE ASBURY/TWITTER (FAT WATER); PAMUJIP/TWITTER (MINAJ); VIA FACEBOOK (THE COCK); ... (420-MILE, SHAKESPEARE); COC/DRE DENNI; RANEK/WIKICOMMONS (LICE); RICK ROWELL/COI; ... (ACHE, DE IN PARADISE); DOYLECH

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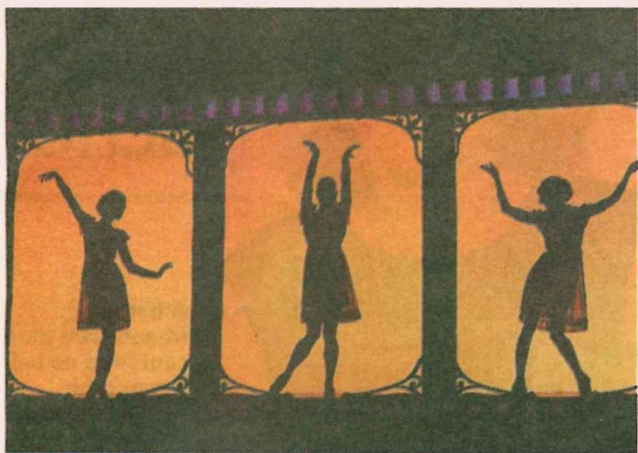
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Newsday

August 24, 2015

theaterbuzz **By Matt Windman**
amNewYork

CIRQUE DU SOLEIL BROADWAY-BOUND



GRUPE CIRQUE DU SOLEIL

"Paramour," the first Cirque du Soleil show to hit Broadway.

THE SHOW "Cirque du Soleil"

THE DEAL For the first time, Cirque du Soleil will come to Broadway next year. "Paramour," a new show set in Golden Age Hollywood combining elements of the Broadway musical with Cirque du Soleil's spectacle and acrobatics, will play the Lyric Theatre (where "On the Town" is about to close), starting in April.

THE SHOW "Spring Awakening"

THE DEAL Camryn Manheim ("The Practice") and Patrick Page ("Spider-Man") will play adult characters in the Broadway revival of "Spring Awakening," joining the previously announced Marlee Matlin and actors who appeared in the show's Los Angeles engagement, including Krysta Rodriguez and Andy Mientus. The 28-member cast is comprised of both hearing and non-hearing actors.

THE SHOW "Matilda"

THE DEAL A film version of the Broadway musical "Matilda" is in the works, director Matthew Warchus and songwriter Tim Minchin recently told the Sydney Morning Herald. Filming is slated to begin in a year. In other "Matilda" news, Natalie Venetia Belcon ("Avenue Q"), Allison Case ("Hair") and Amy Spanger ("Rock of Ages") will join the Broadway cast Sept. 8.



MANUEL HARLAN

"Matilda" will become a movie.