

Limelight

Roar of approval for CAPA

Strong performances carry a symbolic musical



By Ann Efimetz

WILLIAMSBURG

I haven’t heard of “The Roar of the Greasepaint, The Smell of the Crowd” being produced since my college days. So it was interesting to see that the Community Alliance for the Performing Arts was putting the show on at Phi Beta Kappa last weekend. The action of the musical is a bit hard to explain, as it really doesn’t have a concrete plot. It’s more of a social allegory, symbolic of struggles between people. Cocky, the younger, smaller man, is dominated by Sir, who calls all the shots in this “game,” of life. Sir has the upper hand for most of the play, putting Cocky in the position of having to rise up against his oppressor. When Cocky finally wises up and gains some control, he becomes a mirror of Sir, corrupt and power hungry. It ends with the two reaching detente as they head into the future. I think this musical is a tad dated, and on the surface it can be confusing if you don’t delve beyond the dialogue to fish out the hidden meaning. But happily this production had a wonderful director in Belinda Clemons, and talented men to portray the main roles. Musically, it was a gem. So it all worked. Clemons staged it simply, allowing the dialogue between Sir and Cocky to come alive without a lot of distractions. I liked her choice of the game board as well. This play relies heavily on the dynamic between the two men. At its core, it is really verbal ping pong. Clemons orchestrated the give-and-take expertly. Christopher Hull, who performs in “Revolutionary City” at Colonial Williamsburg, played the domineering Sir. Hull is an excellent performer, and I have seen

ON STAGE

The Community Alliance for the Performing Arts featuring The American Youth Players present “The Roar of the Greasepaint, The Smell of the Crowd” by Leslie Bricusse and Anthony Newley. Directed by Belinda Clemons. Performances March 12-13 at Phi Beta Kappa Memorial Hall.

Ovations



AnnEfimetz

his work with the Williamsburg Players. I enjoyed his characterization of Sir, impressed that he was able to create a Machiavellian character while still amusing the audience. Very adroit. He also was able to sing his way through the score quite admirably. Cocky was played by recent CNU graduate Parker Krug. Cocky’s down-but-not-out outlook was the ideal counterpoint to Sir’s acerbic manner. Krug was spot-on throughout, and his voice was able to musically grab you, especially in “Who Can I Turn To?” and “This Dream.” Really nice work. The other principals: Naomi Trevillian, Darrick Peartree, Austin Rosenkrans and Bryan Paul, all brought some interest to the ensemble. Peartree’s “Feeling Good,” was a high point. I don’t want to forget the importance of the band of Urchins played by 13 young women of the American Youth Players. Their colorful costumes, animated dance numbers and spirited responses to the action were an integral part of the production. Last, but certainly not least, was the orchestra, comprised of both professionals and students. In a word, great. The eight-piece group was able to produce a full, vibrant sound. Kudos are due and deserved. It’s been awhile since CAPA has put on a musical, so it was particularly good to see. I think the house agreed, as they topped the production with a rousing standing ovation. □

Guild’s best ever, Anonymous 3

Of the Williamsburg Choral Guild’s recent program, it would be easy to say it was highly successful, one of the Guild’s best ever and leave it at that. But, the overall quality of this program deserves definition. Director Jay BeVille knows his group’s strengths and capabilities and selected works that worked perfectly. Both Haydn’s “Lord Nelson Mass” and Mozart’s “Solemn Vespers” offer an aggregate of musical line and text that, when caringly done, can translate into a strong sense of cohesion and clarity. Such was the case here. The Guild’s carefully and precisely prepared diction, combined with a fine balance across the sections, resulted in an extremely gratifying performance. For the Haydn and the Mozart, the Guild’s meticulous care with the Latin illuminated the texts and, with notable attention to dynamics and details both big and small, enhanced appeal. BeVille also brought to the moment four soloists, whose superb solo and ensemble parts contributed to the excellence of the whole. Bass Branch Fields delivered a stentorian quality to his singing that reflected his operatic and Broadway theatre credits; tenor Kenneth Wood offered a smoothness of sound across his register; Phaedra McNorton provided a rich, focused, and technically secure mezzo-soprano; and Laura Choi Stuart regaled us with her lovely soprano work, a large portion of which was of the virtuosic vein. Rounding off the excellence of the affair was a 26-piece orchestra

Soundings



JohnShulson

IN CONCERT

The Williamsburg Choral Guild, under Jay BeVille, in the Haydn Overture from “Orfeo ed Euridice” and Lord Nelson Mass and the Mozart Solemn Vespers, with soloists and chamber orchestra, in Williamsburg United Methodist Church, March 6. The Art Museums of Colonial Williamsburg and the Virginia Arts Festival present Anonymous 4, in the DeWitt Wallace Decorative Arts Museum, March 4.

that was essentially flawless. BeVille maintained a fine balance between the musicians, chorus, and soloists that was as good as it gets. As always, organist Mildred Young was solid and secure. From the opening Overture from Haydn’s “Orfeo ed Euridice” to Mozart’s magnificent “Magnificat,” the program was a shining moment for the Guild — one of great pleasure and musical achievement. The move made several years ago to craft a collaborative relationship between the Virginia Arts Festival and Colonial Williamsburg has reaped continued and substantial dividends for both parties in terms of tourism, ticket sales, and entertainment.

The established goodwill was recently celebrated in what was billed as a “sneak preview” of a Bruton Parish program to be presented in support of the Virginia Arts Festival by Anonymous 4, the internationally celebrated female a cappella quartet. The event took place in the center court of the Dewitt Wallace Decorative Arts Museum, which was filled with patrons. Prior to the singing, Colonial Williamsburg’s Ronald Hurst and Rob Cross, executive director of the Festival, spoke of the value added to our community by the handshake of cooperation between the festival and C.W. Cross described the exciting lineup of events ahead in the Festival Williamsburg portion of the nearly 40-day event. As for the quality of offerings, the sneak peek of Anonymous 4 (minus one who was ill) was a blue ribbon example. Anonymous “3” provided a brief but brilliant example of its remarkably pure and perfect pitched singing, offering some 13th century Latin-based sacred tunes from Las Huelgas and two gospel songs, “On My Journey Home” and “Sweet Hour of Prayer.” Despite the venture into gospel realm and the slight twist of a twang, the impeccable quality of pure sound, the perfect pitch and placed nuances, the razor-sharp intonation, and the remarkable sense of unity that have become so associated with Anonymous 4 were fully realized and filled the museum with ethereal sounds, appreciation, and admiration. □

WEEKEND

- 10 Battle of the Books**—Local final battle is Friday at Williamsburg Library. Grades 4-5 at 7 p.m., grades 6-8 at 7:45.
- 9 Thursday Afternoon Film Series**—“Foreign Correspondent” (1940) shown at 2 p.m. Williamsburg Library Theatre. Free.
- 8 Bellydance Body workout**—Offered by James City Parks & Rec, 6 p.m. Thursdays, Register at 259-4200.
- 7 Toano Farmers Market**—8 a.m.-4 p.m. daily on Route 60 in Toano. Local produce and more.
- 6 13th annual Potato Drop**—10:30 a.m. Students from William 7 mary and local residents whittle 21 tons of potatoes down to size to provide food to neighbors in need.
- 5 College Creek cleanup**—Volunteers gather to pick up litter and debris from the creek bed, 9 a.m.-noon. Jess Barton, 804 780-1392.
- 4 Concert**—Internationally acclaimed Sufi rock band Junoon perform in concert at 8 p.m. Friday at the Kimball Theatre. The event is free and open to the public. Tickets are required and available through the Kimball box office. .
- 3 Reverse Raffle**—The Junior Woman’s Club of Williamsburg presents the fourth annual event with a chance at a \$5,000 grand prize. 6:30 p.m. March 19 at Trinkle Hall. Tickets \$125 in advance, \$175 day of event. www.williamsburgjuniors.org.
- 2 Russian National Ballet** — Presents “Sleeping Beauty” at 2 p.m. and “Romeo & Juliet” at 8 on Sunday at the Ferguson Center. Tickets \$22-\$52. Call 594-8725.
- 1 Military Through the Ages**—March 19-20 at Jamestown Settlement. Re-enactment groups depicting centuries of military history. Saturday Children’s Parade and Sunday military pass-in preview. 253-4838.

Full calendar, 2-3C

AFTER DARK

Here are 25 opportunities for adults in greater Williamsburg to enjoy live music this week:

Wednesday, March 16

J.M. Randalls—Ladies Night. No cover. Olde Towne Square. 259-0406.

Mystery Dinner Playhouse— “Case of the Country-side Killer,” 7:30 p.m. Clarion Inn & Suites. \$41.95.

Thursday, March 17

Corner Pocket—St. Patrick’s Day celebration with Poisoned Dwarf 5:30-9:30 p.m. March 17 at the Corner Pocket. \$5 admission. 4805 Courthouse St.. 4805 courthouse St. 220-0808.

J.M. Randalls—Harmonica Blues Jam, 5 p.m. Free. At 8:30 p.m. the International Harmonica Convention with the Michael Clark Band. Olde Towne Square. 259-0406.

Poetry at The Crossing —7 p.m. Featuring Christine Sparks and Mary Haines at The Coffeehouse. 220-2654.

Short Stop—At New Town features Ladies Night. 4324 D New Town Ave.

Squires Everyday Gourmet—John Turner, Cliff Williams and David Gardner play airs, jigs and reels. 7 p.m. 6610 Mooretown Rd. 229-6939.

Friday, March 18

415 Grill—At the Hospitality House karaoke and DJ, 10 p.m.-2 a.m. 415 Richmond Rd.

Aromas—Eric Reitz plays 8-10:30 p.m. Prince George Street. No cover.

Center Street Grill—Live music 8-11 p.m. 5101 Center St. 220-4600.

J.M. Randalls—The Ford’s Colony Dand Band plays Big Band swing jump boogie at 8 p.m. 259-0406.

Karaoke—Jungle Jim’s, 8 p.m. 229-5467.

LeYaca—Dimitar Zarev, guitarist, plays 6-9:30 p.m.

Library Tavern— DJ-dancing 10:30 p.m.-1:30 a.m. Richmond Road. 229-1012.

Regency Dining Room— Dining & dancing to the Charlie Costa Trio at the Williamsburg Inn.

Short Stop—At New Town features TGIF Kick Back on the Patio.

Squires Everyday Gourmet—8 p.m. Williamsburg Marketcenter, Mooretown Road.

Vintner’s Cellar Winery—Acoustic music by Bryan Forrest, 7 p.m. 1213-C George Washington Hwy.

Saturday, March 19

415 Grill— At the Hospitality House karaoke with a DJ, 10 p.m.-2 a.m. 229-4020.

Aromas—Live folk music by Al Briggs, 8-10:30 p.m. Prince George Street. No cover.

J.M. Randalls—Impulse plays at 8 p.m. 259-0406. 4854 Longhill Rd.

Regency Dining Room—Dining and dancing to Charlie Costa Trio, Williamsburg Inn.

Sunday, March 20

J.M. Randalls—Service Industry Night, with karaoke. Olde Towne Square, Longhill Road. 259-0406.

Short Stop—In New Town hosts Service Industry Night.

