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HEARD & SCENE

Wilson Models

Justin Vivian Bond and Carol Channing on Fire Island last summer.

The Original 'Dolly' Is Back on Stage, Where She Belongs

By Marshall Heyman

To celebrate both the 50th anniversary of "Hello, Dolly!" and the coming 93rd birthday of Carol Channing, who starred in the original Broadway production, Justin Vivian Bond will host an intimate evening with Ms. Channing at Town Hall this coming Monday.

At "Gentlemen Prefer Blondes," there will be love songs in tribute to Ms. Channing, as well as a conversation between the two performers; a similar presentation took place on Fire Island last summer. Expected to attend the Town Hall performance are Sandra Bernhard, Alan Cumming, Liz Smith and Parker Posey.

"The first show I ever saw was 'Hello Dolly,' performed by the seniors at an old folks home, and that influenced my future aesthetics," Justin Vivian Bond, who is also staring in "A Man's A Man" at the Classic Stage Company, said over the phone. That experience led to an obsessive interest in Ms. Channing. When the singers came together on stage last summer for the first time, "we had so much chemistry. I know so many of her stories. She's very comfortable and I'm very comfortable, and it adds up to something extraordinary."

Ms. Channing lives in California and is coming to New York just for the night. She answered a few questions from her home in Palm Springs.

How did you like performing with Justin Vivian Bond?

I hadn't met him before. I didn't know who he was. But he was the most chivalrous man I'd ever talked to. He down-staged me! Do you know what that means? I have never been down-staged before. Mostly actors upstage one another in order to get the point across to the audience. This man down-staged me. He treated me with respect.

What kinds of questions did he ask you?

Oh, gosh. I don't know. I can't remember! It was too long ago. But it was all about how glorious it is to work in the theater if you really treasure it. This man loves the theater just like I do.

How do you feel about the 50th anniversary of "Hello, Dolly!"?

Oh, yes, I'm all for it.

Do you know how many times you performed the role of Dolly Levi, the matchmaker?

Surely somebody knows. But I don't!

Why do you think you were so good in the part?

I'm unaware of being so great. I don't think you ever think that.

What did you like about the character?

She was principled, and she was funny. Thornton Wilder wrote her, you know, and he was one of the six greatest playwrights in the United States in the history of America. That's a privilege right there. He was a great man and a great writer and it was everything to learn about her. I got to know him and he would write letters to me and he put little violets in the margins.

How did you get the part?

I haven't the slightest idea. David Merrick—I call him Mr. Merrick—simply decided I should play it. Once you get perspective on yourself as an actor, it's not very good. It's the way nature works. The byplay between people works better if you don't think you're so great, and I just never did. Noel Coward came back stage when I was doing [the musical revue] "Lend an Ear." This was my very first show. He got down on one knee and he complimented me. He said, "You'll see, you'll be right at the top of Broadway." If you're really dedicated to making people laugh, then they're dedicated to you for doing it.

Back to Mealing and Dealing

By Adrienne Gaffney

Getty Images (3)

Andrew, Jonathan and James Tisch, below right, cut their way into the newly renovated Loews Regency Hotel and the inaugural power breakfast, above. Below left, Jonathan Tisch and Spike Lee.

The black cars were back outside the Loews Regency Hotel on Thursday morning.

After a year-long renovation, the hotel has reopened, bringing its famed power breakfast to life again. The hotel's owners have made the Regency Bar & Grill the incontestable destination for early morning dealmaking since the 1970s, with the likes of Katie Couric, Christine Quinn, CBS's Les Moonves and former New York Giant Michael Strahan as loyalists.

The morning ritual migrated up two blocks to the Park Avenue Winter during the renovation, and the restaurant was granted temporary use of the Regency's meticulously maintained seating chart. The inaugural meal brought back regulars like David Dinkins, Al Sharpton, Ray Kelly, city comptroller Scott Stringer and Spike Lee.

"This has always been my go-to place to have a breakfast meeting. You not only can get whatever you need to get done at that meeting, you get to meet other people. It's a great meeting place," explained Joe Lhota. Had the former GOP mayoral candidate, who opted for eggs and bacon, made any deals there? "Yeah and I'm not going to talk about it!"

Others were more forthcoming about their power breakfast memories.

"We met in New York in this room. He was sitting at a window table right there. I was sitting with my new boss whom I brought over to see him," attorney Rikki Klieman (preferred menu item: scrambled eggs) said of her husband, newly installed NYPD Commissioner William Bratton (scrambled egg whites, Canadian bacon and a toasted english muffin). "And he, at 8:15 in the morning, said to me, 'You look so beautiful, if you were single I would marry you.' And I said, 'Perhaps you should call me for lunch.'"

Chairman Jonathan Tisch—whose father came up with the notion of the power breakfast during the financial crisis of the 1970s, when the hotel was the site of his morning meetings with real-estate titan Lew Rudin and banker Felix Rohatyn—was overjoyed by the breakfast's return. "Look at the confluence of politics, business, culture, entertainment. All those conversations, many of the men and women start their day at the Regency Hotel and the power breakfast. And we wanted to recreate a space that was comfortable, warm, inviting so that people can do their business and then start their day and be productive," he said.

For day one, the kitchen offered a simple welcome back menu, offering standbys like eggs benedict and oatmeal with berries. (Though one guest quipped that the menu might ultimately end up serving only as a "suggestion," as long timers know to ask for exactly what they want.) And for anyone who may have blanched at the price of the omelets, there was a welcome surprise: All checks were picked up by the house.

Same Red Door Spa, Different Clients

By Carson Griffith

This isn't your mother's Elizabeth Arden Red Door Spa.

Sure, it has the iconic red door near the reception desk. And it sells all the same products (Eight Hour Cream, anyone?) as the original location on Fifth Avenue.

But on Tuesday, at the opening of the newest Elizabeth Arden Red Door Spa, at Park Avenue South and 17th Street, the party seemed geared toward a younger clientele. Pitbull and Ke$ha's hit song "Timber" played over the loudspeaker while Beautified app co-founder Hannah Bronfman walked through the packed, brightly lighted space. Julie Macklowe, founder of her own beauty line vbeauté, bopped from one person to the next as pouty models in red dresses sat on a stage for hair demos, and (mostly younger) guests lined up to get their skin tone matched to take home little bottles of the perfect shade of foundation.

"I think that the idea is what Elizabeth Arden did one hundred years ago uptown at the Fifth Avenue Red Door Spa location in her time is exactly what we're doing here," said Kathy Widmer, the chief marketing officer for Elizabeth Arden.

"It's downtown, it's younger women, but the idea is exactly the same," she said. "It's just trying to bring the science, the heritage of the brand, the quality of the products and services to women in a really relevant way. And we feel like you can't say you are modern; you just have to show up modern."

The guests had the chance to help a good cause. For the opening, Elizabeth Arden partnered with the GO Project, a nonprofit that gives academic and emotional support to almost 600 students from schools in lower Manhattan.

Among the guests was GO Project board member Meredith Ross, who described the organization as an "irreplaceable resource for kids between kindergarten and eighth grade and their families for educational support. We find kids who need help, who are just about to fall between the cracks."

Of the outreach by Elizabeth Arden, Ms. Ross said: "We're so thankful and kind of blown away that in the first few months they open they'd say, 'We care about education, we care about downtown.' That feels pretty good."

To Ms. Widmer, the fit seemed natural.

"We think it's very synergistic," she explained. "We both have something to get out of this partnership. This space is geared very much toward affluent, working young women in the downtown area, and the GO Project is staffed by women who have those connections and they have a tremendously worthy cause so what we're able to do is support their cause both through our donation to them and through our ongoing efforts here."

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

THE JAZZ SCENE | By Will Friedwald

Inspired by Graphics and Film

Diane Schuur

◆ **Birdland**
315 W. 44th St.
(212) 581-3080
Through Saturday
Since the beginning of her career, singer and pianist Diane Schuur has always had a big voice—we're talking truly tremendous chops. But over the last 30 years or so, she's grown increasingly canny about how most wisely to deploy her impeccable technique. In the 21st-century especially, Ms. Schuur has become a much more subtle artist, capable of mellow moods as well as blasting out those big high notes that were always her signature. Her Birdland debut is her best show yet, giving us the more mature-Schuur, but also taking us back to her beginnings, as she honors the two major mentors of her personal and professional life, Stan Getz and Frank Sinatra, in radiant arrangements by Alan Broadbent.

Art Spiegelman & Phil Johnston 'Wordless'

◆ **Brooklyn Academy of Music**
30 Lafayette Ave., Brooklyn
(718) 636-4100
Saturday
Subtitled an "intellectual vaudeville," this unusual work combines various disciplines of the popular arts: graphics, cartoons, jazz and narration. The images that are presented may be bereft of words, but, thankfully, Pulitzer Prize-winning illustrator and author Art Spiegelman has a few choice ones. Often called "the father of the graphic novel," Mr. Spiegelman presents illustrated examples of the graphic novel form going back decades before his own "Maus"-terpiece. The original score is by saxophonist and composer Phil Johnston, best known for the now-iconic Microscopic Septet, whose music is as quirky, eccentric and memorable as Mr. Spiegelman's artwork.

Tim Ries & the East Gipsy Band

◆ **Jazz Standard**
116 E. 27th St.
(212) 576-2232
Wednesday
Tim Reis is best known for playing the music of Mick Jagger and Keith Richards, which he has done successfully both in jazz clubs with his own bands as well as on the road with those legendary rockers themselves. For his current project, the saxophonist works with a different bunch of rolling stones, the East Gipsy Band of Budapest. One wouldn't have thought that modern jazz and traditional Roma music would blend together quite so compellingly—especially since the band features violin (Lajos Sárközi) and a vocalist (Gusztáv Balogh), as well as the cimbalom (Vilmos Oláh), a unique Hungarian instrument quite possibly never employed in a jazz context before. But it helps that most of the East Gipsies have considerable jazz pedigrees, including the pianist and leader József Balázs, and the two sides of this equation complement each other remarkably well.

Joe Fiedler's Big Sackbut, Chamber Music America 36th Annual Conference

◆ **The Westin New York at Times Square**
270 W. 43rd St.
chamber-music.org
Friday
Of all the jazz horns, the trombone has the greatest penchant for humor (the instrument never lets you forget that it's descended from something called a "sackbut")—groaning, whining, burping and laughing, the major jazz trombonists are proud of the horn's ability to replicate a human voice. Thus the quartet led by Joe Fiedler and co-starring Luis Bonilla, Ryan Keberle and Marcus Rojas, is a unique ensemble of harmonizing comedians, made even more so with the addition of Steven Bernstein, who plays his diminutive slide trumpet as if it were the Mini-Me of the big sliding horn. Joe Fiedler's "Sackbut Stomp" contains two interpretations of familiar melodies sure to induce riotous laughter, Roger Miller's quasi-country "King of The Road" and "Tin Tin Deo," which, in this context, seems like Dizzy Gillespie's answer to "Babalu"—from Desi to Dizzy.

Singer Lauren Fox

Lynn Redmile

Lauren Fox & Ritt Henn, 'Ghosts of Love—Songs from the Reel World of David Lynch'

◆ **The Triad (Stage 72)**
158 W. 72nd St., (800) 838-3006
Saturday, Jan. 23 and 24
This atmospheric presentation, as much a theatrical event as a nightclub set, reduces narrative, both sung and spoken, to its barest essence with the singing of Lauren Fox and the fender bass and vocals of Ritt Henn. The two juxtapose songs heard in the unsettling films of the provocative auteur David Lynch alongside often cryptic dialogue from those same movies. As in "Twin Peaks" or "Lost Highway," the overall result is dark, dark, dark—and hypnotically compelling. There's unexpected levity in their interpretations of cheerful songs like "I've Told Every Little Star" and "This Magic Moment" (as even the 1960 bubblegum hit "Sixteen Reasons"), which have now been thoroughly "Lynched."

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