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**2009/10 Season News**  
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## **UPDATE**

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### **DAVID HYDE PIERCE TO HOST THE NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC'S PRESENTATION OF**

### **SONDHEIM: The Birthday Concert March 15–16, 2010**

#### **American Ballet Theatre Principal Dancers Gillian Murphy and Ethan Stiefel Join Cast; Josh Rhodes Is the Choreographer**

David Hyde Pierce will host the New York Philharmonic's presentation of **SONDHEIM: The Birthday Concert**, Monday, March 15, and Tuesday, March 16, 2010, at 7:30 p.m. Joining the previously announced production are American Ballet Theatre principal dancers Gillian Murphy and Ethan Steifel in their Philharmonic debuts, with choreography by Josh Rhodes, also making his debut. This celebration of the 80th birthday of the great Broadway and film composer/lyricist will include Stephen Sondheim's most enduring orchestral music and songs, in addition to rarely-heard material, performed by a cast of Broadway stars. (See last page for previously announced cast.) Paul Gemignani, Mr. Sondheim's longtime collaborator, will conduct the New York Philharmonic; Lonny Price is the director; and Mr. Price and Matt Cowart are the producers.

On Monday, March 15, 2010, the New York Philharmonic will celebrate Stephen Sondheim with its Spring Gala. The Gala Chairmen are Leni and Peter May and Donna and Benjamin M. Rosen. BNY Mellon is the presenting sponsor. For information about the Gala, which includes a pre-concert reception, concert, and post-concert birthday dinner with the artists, please contact Courtney Ford at (212) 875-5760 or e-mail her at [fordc@nyphil.org](mailto:fordc@nyphil.org).

#### **About Stephen Sondheim**

Considered by many to be the greatest Broadway composer/lyricist of his time, Stephen Sondheim (b. March 22, 1930) wrote the music and lyrics for *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum* (1962); *Anyone Can Whistle* (1964); *Company* (1970); *Follies* (1971); *A Little Night Music* (1973); *The Frogs* (1974); *Pacific Overtures* (1976); *Sweeney Todd* (1979); *Merrily We Roll Along* (1981); *Sunday in the Park with George*  
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(1984; winner of the 1985 Pulitzer Prize for Drama); *Into the Woods* (1987); *Assassins* (1991); *Passion* (1994); and *Road Show* (2008). He wrote the lyrics for *West Side Story* (1957); *Gypsy* (1959) and *Do I Hear a Waltz?* (1965); and additional lyrics for *Candide* (1973). *Side by Side by Sondheim* (1976), *Marry Me a Little* (1981), *You're Gonna Love Tomorrow* (1983), and *Putting It Together* (1993) are anthologies of his work as composer and lyricist.

For film, Stephen Sondheim composed the score for *Stavisky* (1974), and co-composed the music for *Reds* (1981) as well as songs for *Dick Tracy* (1990). He also wrote the songs for the television production *Evening Primrose* (1966), and co-authored the film *The Last of Sheila* (1973) and the play *Getting Away with Murder* (1996). He provided incidental music for the plays *The Girls of Summer* (1956), *Invitation to a March* (1961), *Twigs* (1971), and *The Enclave* (1973). His first professional musical, *Saturday Night* (1954), finally had its New York premiere in 1999. Mr. Sondheim is on the council of the Dramatists Guild — the national association of playwrights, composers, and lyricists — and served as its president from 1973 to 1981, when he founded Young Playwrights Inc. to develop and promote the work of American playwrights ages 18 years and younger.

### **Sondheim at the New York Philharmonic**

In May 2000 the New York Philharmonic presented three concert performances of Stephen Sondheim's *Sweeney Todd*, starring Patti LuPone, George Hearn, Audra McDonald, Jon Aler, Davis Gaines, Heidi Grant Murphy, Neil Patrick Harris, Stanford Olsen, and Paul Plishka. Andrew Litton conducted and Lonny Price directed. A recording of the live performances was released on the Philharmonic's Special Editions label and was nominated for a Grammy Award. This followed the Orchestra's star-studded September 1985 performances of Sondheim's *Follies*, conducted by Paul Gemignani and directed by Herbert Ross, with a cast that included Licia Albanese, Carol Burnett, Liz Callaway, Betty Comden, Barbara Cook, Adolph Green, George Hearn, Howard McGillin, Erie Mills, Liliane Montevecchi, Phyllis Newman, Mandy Patinkin, Daisy Prince, Lee Remick, Elaine Stritch, and Andre Gregory. The concert and recording of the live performance were produced by Thomas Z. Shepard, and a BBC Television documentary about the making of the show was later combined with parts of the performance for DVD release. In May 2004, the New York Philharmonic presented semi-staged concert performances of Bernstein's *Candide* — a musical for which Stephen Sondheim contributed lyrics.

### **Newly Announced Artists**

**David Hyde Pierce** last appeared with the New York Philharmonic in April 2003 as Benedict in Berlioz's *Béatrice et Bénédict*, conducted by Sir Colin Davis. He made his professional and Broadway debut in 1982 as the waiter in Christopher Durang's *Beyond Therapy*; other Broadway credits include *The Heidi Chronicles*, *Monty Python's Spamalot*, *Accent on Youth*, and the Kander and Ebb/Rupert Holmes musical, *Curtains*, for which he won the 2007 Tony Award for Lead Actor in a Musical. He created roles in the Off-Broadway and regional productions of Mark O'Donnell's *That's it Folks!*; Richard Greenberg's *The Author's Voice* and *The Maderati*; Harry Kondoleon's *Zero*

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*Positive*; Jules Feiffer's *Elliot Loves*; and Richard Alfieri's *Six Dance Lessons in Six Weeks* (with Uta Hagen). In addition to his work in new plays, Mr. Pierce also appeared in *Hamlet* and *Much Ado About Nothing* at the New York Shakespeare Festival; *Holiday* and *Camille* at the Long Wharf Theatre; *The Seagull*, *Tartuffe*, *Cyrano*, and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at the Guthrie Theatre; and Peter Brook's production of *The Cherry Orchard* in New York, Moscow, Leningrad, and Tokyo. His film credits include *Bright Lights*, *Big City*; *Crossing Delancy*; *Little Man Tate*; *Sleepless in Seattle*; *Wolf*; *Nixon*; *Isn't She Great*; *Wet Hot American Summer*; *Full Frontal*; *Down with Love*; the recent Sundance Film Festival Selection, *The Perfect Host*; and the animated films *A Bug's Life*, *Osmosis Jones*, and *Treasure Planet*. His television credits include a short but happy stint on Norman Lear's political satire, *The Powers That Be*, and a long but happy stint on *Frasier*, for which he received multiple Emmy and Screen Actors Guild Awards. Mr. Pierce recently teamed with Victoria Clark and Rob Fisher in *Night and Day*, a Cole Porter Evening, for Jazz at Lincoln Center and the Ravinia Festival, and with Michael Feinstein in his Holiday Celebration at Mr. Feinstein's club at the Regency.

Choreographer **Josh Rhodes**'s credits include *Broadway: Three Generations* at the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts; *Working* at the Old Globe Theatre; *Barnum* at the Asolo Repertory Theatre (Sarasota Theatre Award); *Tintypes* at the Maltz Jupiter Theatre; *1776* at the Paper Mill Playhouse; *Breaking Up Is Hard to Do* at the Ogunquit Playhouse; *Chess*, *The Full Monty*, and *Dreamgirls* at the North Carolina Theatre; *Bonnie & Clyde* at the New York Musical Theater Festival; *High Spirits* at the York Theatre Company; *Beautiful Girls* at the Manhattan School of Music; *All Singing, All Dancing, Legends!*, and *Broadway by the Year-1954* at Town Hall; and numerous opening numbers for Broadway Cares's *Gypsy of the Year*, *Easter Bonnet Competition*, and *Broadway Bares*. Mr. Rhodes was the assistant choreographer for the Broadway, West End, and national touring productions of *The Drowsy Chaperone*, and associate choreographer for the workshop of the upcoming Broadway musical, *American Idiot*. His performance credits on Broadway include *Fosse*, *Bells Are Ringing*, *Sweet Smell of Success*, *Urban Cowboy*, *Man of La Mancha*, *The Boy from Oz*, and *Chicago*.

Raised in Florence, South Carolina, dancer **Gillian Murphy** trained primarily at the North Carolina School of the Arts. In 1994, when she was 15, she was a finalist at the Jackson International Ballet Competition. In 1995 she was awarded the Prix de Lausanne Espoir, and in 1998, a Princess Grace Foundation-USA grant. In 2009 the Princess Grace Foundation awarded Ms. Murphy the Statue Award, its highest honor. Ms. Murphy joined American Ballet Theatre (ABT) as a member of the corps de ballet in August 1996 and was promoted to soloist in 1999 and to principal dancer in 2002. Her repertoire with the company includes leading roles *Swan Lake*, *Don Quixote*, *Manon*, *La fille mal Gardée*, *Sylvia*, *Cinderella*, *Le Corsaire*, *Giselle*, *La Bayadère*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Othello*, and *The Sleeping Beauty*. She has been prominently featured in the company's shorter works by choreographed by George Balanchine, Jerome Robbins, Jiri Kylian,

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Antony Tudor, William Forsythe, Martha Graham, James Kudelka, Lar Lubovitch, Frederick Ashton, and Agnes de Mille, and she has appeared in world premieres by Benjamin Millepied, Stanton Welch, Jorma Elo, Peter Quanz, Natalie Weir, John Neumeier, and Robert Hill. Ms. Murphy danced the role of Odette-Odile in the ABT telecast of *Swan Lake* and also appeared in telecasts of ABT's *Le Corsaire*, the Washington Opera's *Die Fledermaus*, the Balanchine Foundation's *Melissa Hayden Project*, and the feature films *Center Stage* and its sequel, *Center Stage: Turn it Up*. Ms. Murphy has appeared throughout the United States and worldwide. She made her debut with the Kirov Ballet in St. Petersburg dancing Odette-Odile in March 2008. In December 2009 she appeared in a series of performances of *Cinderella* with the Kiev Ballet in Athens, Greece.

Dancer **Ethan Stiefel** started his professional career with the New York City Ballet and was a principal dancer with the Zurich Ballet; he is currently a principal dancer with American Ballet Theatre and dean of The School of Dance at the University of North Carolina School of the Arts. He starred in the feature film *Center Stage*, and returned to play the role of Cooper Nielsen in its sequel, *Center Stage: Turn It Up*. His repertoire includes leading roles in all of the full-length classics as well as works by Frederick Ashton, Jiri Kylian, Nils Christie, Paul Taylor, Auguste Bournonville, William Forsythe, Jerome Robbins, Lar Lubovitch, George Balanchine, Bob Fosse, Antony Tudor, and Mark Morris. Numerous choreographers have created works for Mr. Stiefel, including Twyla Tharp and Christopher Wheeldon. Mr. Stiefel's television credits include *The Dream*, *Le Corsaire*, and the documentary, *Born to Be Wild*. He has made numerous appearances as a guest artist with the Royal Ballet, Kirov Ballet, New York City Ballet, Australian Ballet, and other prestigious companies throughout the world. In December 2009 he staged and choreographed a production of *The Nutcracker* for the University of the North Carolina School of the Arts. He has been a guest teacher for many institutions including American Ballet Theatre II, American Ballet Theatre's Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis School, and the Royal Ballet School. His Royal Highness Crown Prince Albert of Monaco presented Mr. Stiefel with the Statue Award of the Princess Grace Foundation, the foundation's highest honor, in October 1999. He received the *Dance Magazine* Award in December 2008.

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**Credit Suisse** is the Global Sponsor of the New York Philharmonic.

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The New York Philharmonic's Spring Gala, on Monday, March 15, is presented by **BNY Mellon**.

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Programs of the New York Philharmonic are supported, in part, by public funds from the **New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, New York State Council on the Arts, and the National Endowment for the Arts.**

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David Hyde Pierce To Host Philharmonic's Sondheim Celebration/5

Single tickets for these performances are \$75 to \$250. All tickets may be purchased online at [nyphil.org](http://nyphil.org) or by calling (212) 875-5656, 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. daily. **Very limited availability.** Tickets may also be purchased at the Avery Fisher Hall Box Office or the Alice Tully Hall Box Office at Lincoln Center, Broadway at 65th Street. The Box Office opens at 10:00 a.m. Monday through Saturday, and at noon on Sunday. On performance evenings, the Box Office closes one-half hour after performance time; other evenings it closes at 6:00 p.m.

[Ticket prices subject to change.]

For press tickets, call Lanore Carr in the New York Philharmonic Communications Department at (212) 875-5714, or e-mail her at [carrl@nyphil.org](mailto:carrl@nyphil.org).

For Gala tickets, call Courtney Ford at (212) 875-5760, or e-mail her at [fordc@nyphil.org](mailto:fordc@nyphil.org).

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**New York Philharmonic**

Avery Fisher Hall

**SONDHEIM: The Birthday Concert**

Monday, March 15, 2010, 7:30 p.m.<sup>†</sup>

Tuesday, March 16, 2010, 7:30 p.m.

Paul Gemignani, conductor

Josh Rhodes, choreographer

Lonny Price, director

Lonny Price and Matt Cowart, producers

David Hyde Pierce, host

Cast to include:

Laura Benanti\*

Matt Cavanaugh\*

Michael Cerveris\*

Victoria Clark\*

Jenn Colella\*

Jason Danieley\*

Joanna Gleason\*

Nathan Gunn

George Hearn

Patti LuPone

Marin Mazzie

Audra McDonald

John McMartin\*

Donna Murphy\*

Gillian Murphy\*

Laura Osnes\*

Mandy Patinkin

Bernadette Peters\*

Bobby Steggert

Ethan Stiefel\*

Elaine Stritch

Jim Walton

Chip Zien\*

Songs and orchestral music from Stephen Sondheim musicals and film scores

<sup>†</sup>*Gala benefit*

\*denotes New York Philharmonic debut

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