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Hershey Felder as Irving Berlin

Music & Lyrics by IRVING BERLIN

Book by HERSHEY FELDER

Directed by TREVOR HAY


JUNE 21 - 30, 2019
the Cast in order of appearance

Irving Berlin............................................................................................................................ Hershey Felder

There will be no intermission.

Acknowledgments

Mary Ellin Barrett, Linda Louise Emmet, and the entire Berlin family for their support and encouragement. And in loving memory of Elizabeth Irving Peters, a dear friend.

Eva Price, Ted Chapin, Mary G. Campbell, Nicole Harman; Dan and Phyllis Epstein, Mead Killion and Gail Gudmundsen, Susan and Moses Libitzky, Jean and Mike Strunsky; Erika Bendersky, Beth Schenker, Steve Robinson, Amy Carstensen; Vivian Chiu, Bradley Curtin, Stephen Travers, and Steinway & Sons; MJ Bogatin, Esq.

Todd Salovey and Sam Woodhouse, Sheila and Jeff Lipinsky and San Diego Rep for hosting Berlin concert presentations.


A heartfelt thank you to my team of devoted artists without whom none of our work would be possible, especially Karen Racanelli, Erik Carstensen, Trevor Hay, Meghan Maiya, Stacey Nezda, Christopher Ash, Erik Barry, Brian McMullen, Richard Norwood, Lawrence Siefert, Samantha and the entire Greek Family.

Thanks to Darko Tresnjak, Melia Bensussen, Emily Van Scoy, Elizabeth Williamson, Bryan Holcombe, Samantha Donnelly, the Marketing & Communications Department, Box Office, house staff, and everyone at Hartford Stage.

A special thank you to Candice and Joel Zwick, and Joel Zwick “Alone.”


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HERSHEY FELDER
IRVING BERLIN | PLAYWRIGHT

Named to Time Magazine’s 2016 Top 10 Plays and Musicals, Hershey Felder has played over 5,000 performances of his self-created solo productions at some of the world’s most prestigious theatres and has broken box office records consistently. American Theatre Magazine has said, “Hershey Felder is in a category all his own.” His shows include George Gershwin Alone (Broadway’s Helen Hayes Theatre, West End’s Duchess Theatre); Monsieur Chopin; Beethoven: Maestro (Leonard Bernstein); Franz Liszt in Musik, Lincoln: An American Story, Hershey Felder as Irving Berlin, Our Great Tchaikovsky; and A Paris Love Story. His compositions and recordings include Aliyah, Concerto for Piano and Orchestra; Fairy tale, a musical; Les Anges de Paris, Suite for Violin and Piano; Song Settings; Saltimbancas for Piano and Orchestra; Etudes Thematiques for Piano; and An American Story for Actor and Orchestra. Hershey is the adaptor, director and designer for the internationally performed play-with-music The Pianist of Willesden Lane with Steinway artist Mona Golabek; producer and designer for the musical Louis and Keely: ‘Live’ at the Sahara, directed by Taylor Hackford; and writer and director for Flying Solo, featuring opera legend Nathan Gunn. Upcoming projects include Anna and Sergei, a new play featuring the music of Sergei Rachmaninoff; as well as a new musical based on the award-winning book Out on a Ledge by Eva Litzkyz. Hershey has operated a full-service production company since 2001. He has been a scholar-in-residence at Harvard University’s Department of Music and is married to Kim Campbell, the first female Prime Minister of Canada.

TREVOR HAY
DIRECTOR

Directed the world premieres of An American Story for Actor and Orchestra, Abe Lincoln’s Piano, Hershey Felder As Franz Liszt In Musik and Our Great Tchaikovsky. He is Associate Director for Mona Golabek’s The Pianist of Willesden Lane. Former member of the historic Old Globe Theatre in San Diego where, at the age of nine, his first position was selling Old Globe memorabilia. Over the next 32 years, Mr. Hay went on to various aspects of production on more than 80 presentations, including the Broadway productions of Jack O’Brien’s Damn Yankees, How the Grinch Stole Christmas, and Twyla Tharpe’s The Times They Are A-Changin’. Included in his 23 seasons at the Old Globe were eleven seasons of the Summer Shakespeare Festival Repertory, as well as work on Tracy Letts’ August: Osage County, directed by Sam Gold, and Hershey Felder’s George Gershwin Alone, Monsieur Chopin and Maestro Bernstein.

JOEL ZWICK
CONSULTING PRODUCER

Joel Zwick directed My Big Fat Greek Wedding, the highest-grossing romantic comedy of all time. Recent films include Fat Albert and Elvis Has Left the Building. Mr. Zwick directed the Broadway production of George Gershwin Alone at the Helen Hayes Theatre. Mr. Zwick began his theatrical career at La Mama E.T.C., as director of the La Mama Plexus. He has directed on Broadway, Off-Broadway and Broadway touring companies. He and Hershey Felder have collaborated on Monsieur Chopin, Beethoven As I Knew Him and Maestro. Currently, Mr. Zwick is recognized as one of Hollywood’s most prolific directors of episodic television, having the direction of over 650 episodes to his credit. New York productions have included Dance with Me (Tony nomination), Shenandoah (Broadway national tour), Oklahoma! (national tour) and Cold Storage (American Place Theater). He acted in the original New York production of MacBird. He directed Esther (Promenade Theatre, NY), Merry-Go-Round (Chicago and Las Vegas), Last Chance Saloon and Woyzeck (West End). Mr. Zwick has taught drama at Yale University, Brooklyn College, Queens College, Wheaton College, and the University of Southern California. He is a graduate (BA, MA) of Brooklyn College.

RICHARD NORWOOD
LIGHTING DESIGN

Recent designs for Hershey Felder Presents are Nathan Gunn: Flying Solo, Louis and Keely ‘Live’ at the Sahara, Jamaica Farewell, Monsieur Chopin, and Beethoven, As I Knew Him. Richard’s other recent work includes Lady Day at Emerson’s Bar and Grill for Congo Square, Chicago and Occidental Express for Trap Door Theatre, Chicago. Richard is the production manager for the MCA Stage at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago.

CHRISTOPHER ASH
PROJECT CO-DESIGN


LAWRENCE SIEFERT
PROJECT CO-DESIGN

For over twenty years, Lawrence has been involved in theatre, corporate events and film. Some of his credits include projection design for the San Diego Opera’s Wozzeck and Moby Dick. He is a recipient of two Telly Awards and one Davy Award for How Do You Build Hope (Habitat for Humanity).

ERIK CARSTENSEN
SOUND DESIGNER | PRODUCTION MANAGER

Erik has worked for Eighty-Eight Entertainment since 2008. He has served as sound designer on Hershey Felder as Irving Berlin, Jamaica Farewell, Baritones Unbound, Louis and Keely ‘Live’ at the Sahara, Jack Lemmon’s Son, Rockstar, An American Story, The Pianist of Willesden Lane (2012 Ovation Award Nomination), Maestro Leonard Bernstein, and Beethoven As I Knew Him (2009 Ovation Award Winner). Formerly, he was the master sound technician at the Old Globe Theatre in San Diego and was production engineer on over 60 productions, including Allegiance, Robin and the Seven Hoods, A Catered Affair, Hershey Felder’s George Gershwin Alone, Dirty Rotten Scoundrels, Chita Rivera—A Dancer’s Life, Dr. Seuss’ How the Grinch Stole Christmas!, The Full Monty, Dirty Blonde, and Floyd Collins.

STACEY NEZDA
COSTUME & SCENIC ARTIST

An Orange County, CA native, Stacey was a dresser and stitcher at Laguna Playhouse, South Coast Repertory, and other regional theatres for twenty years before joining Hershey Felder Presents. Her favorite credits include her nieces’ and nephew’s annual Halloween costumes, especially the Frodo Baggins complete with big, hairy hobbit feet.
MEGHAN MAIYA
HISTORICAL & BIOGRAPHICAL RESEARCH
Meghan is the Director of Research and Special Projects for Hershey Felder Presents. She has been doing research for the company’s new theatrical productions since 2013. Productions include Hershey Felder as Franz Liszt in Music; Hershey Felder as Irving Berlin; and Our Great Tchaikovsky. Additional projects include Production Research & Imagery for Louis and Keely Live! at the Sahara; scenic decoration for The Pianist of Willesden Lane, Abe Lincoln’s Piano, Hershey Felder as Irving Berlin, and Jamaica Farewell. Formerly, Meghan worked in the Department of Family Medicine and Public Health at the University of California, San Diego as a Senior Program Evaluation Specialist and Project Manager. She managed multiple research projects in the fields of Integrative Medicine and Behavioral Health. Additionally, Meghan spent twelve years as a psychology professor at San Diego State University and local community colleges.

EVA PRICE
PRODUCER
Eva Price is a two-time Tony Award-winning Broadway producer whose credits include more than fifteen Broadway plays, musicals and concerts. Credits include Angels in America (Tony winner for Best Revival); Dear Evan Hansen (Tony winner for Best Musical); On Your Feet; Frankie Valli and the Four Seasons on Broadway; Peter and the Starcatcher; Colin Quinn: Long Story Short (directed by Jerry Seinfeld); Annie; The Merchant of Venice, starring Al Pacino; Carrie Fisher’s Wishful Drinking; The Addams Family, as well as several solo shows and critically acclaimed concerts. She is the Executive Producer/EVP for Maximum Entertainment, a producing and general management company focusing on Broadway, Off-Broadway, and touring properties. Upcoming Alanis Morissette’s Jagged Little Pill.

KAREN RACANELLI
EXECUTIVE PRODUCER
Karen comes to Hershey Felder Presents from Berkeley Repertory Theatre, where she worked as General Manager for 22 years, overseeing daily operations, and produced several shows performed and/or directed by Hershey Felder. She has represented the League of Resident Theatres during negotiations with both Actors’ Equity Association and the union of Stage Directors and Choreographers, served on LORT’s Executive Committee and served as a panelist at several LORT meetings. Prior to her tenure at Berkeley Rep, Karen worked as an independent producer at several Bay Area theatre companies and has served on the boards of Climate Theater, Overtone Theatre Company, Park Day School, and the Julia Morgan Center. Karen was named a 2018 “Unsung Hero of Arts Administration” by the national arts and culture organization, Fractured Atlas. She is married to Bay Area arts attorney MJ Bogatin.

SAMANTHA F. VOXAKIS
PRODUCER | COMPANY MANAGER
Since shortly after joining the company in early 2004, Sam has been responsible for the day-to-day operations of Eighty-Eight LLC and Hershey Felder Presents. Prior to that, she spent twelve memorable years in the front office of the Baltimore Orioles. With special thanks to her family and Mr. Felder.

HERSHEY FELDER PRESENTS
PRODUCER
Hershey Felder Presents is the newest division of Eighty-Eight Entertainment which was created in 2001 by Hershey Felder and is devoted to the creation of new works of musical theatre. Current projects include the musical plays Our Great Tchaikovsky, Hershey Felder as Irving Berlin, and The Pianist of Willesden Lane. Recordings include Love Songs of the Yiddish Theatre, Back from Broadway, George Gershwin Alone, Monsieur Chopin, Beethoven As I Knew Him, and An American Story for Actor & Orchestra.

ELIZABETH WILLIAMSON
ASSOCIATE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR
Elizabeth Williamson is in her seventh season at Hartford Stage. In addition to serving as Associate Artistic Director, she also leads new play development for the company. Prior to joining Hartford Stage, she spent four seasons as Associate Artistic Director and Literary Manager for Pioneer Theatre Company, Dramaturgy Hartford Stage; The Flamingo Kid, The Engagement Party, Make Believe, Romeo and Juliet, The Body of an American, An Opening in Time, Hamlet, Reverberation, Macbeth, Man in a Case, Somewhere, A Gentleman’s Guide to Love and Murder and others; London’s West End: The Inheritance; Broadway: A Gentleman’s Guide to Love & Murder (Tony Award for Best Musical), Anastasia; Off-Broadway/Regional: The Body of an American (Primary Stages); Touch(ed), In, Find and Sign and others (Pioneer Theatre Company); M. Proust (Steppenwolf); Melissofete (Theatre de la Jeune Lune). Directing Cloud 9, Seder, Henry V (Hartford Stage); The Life and Death of Pier Paolo Pasolini (Act French Festival, Abingdon); The Floating World (HERE); Rare Bird (Babcock Theatre); Owners (Alter); The Second Amendment Club (AMS); The Maids (FringeNYC). Translation La Dispute (Hartford Stage); The Life and Death of Pier Paolo Pasolini (Act French Festival, Abingdon). Education Bachelor’s in Theatre and Comparative Literature, Bennington College; Master’s in European Literature, Oxford University; trained at the Ecole Internationale de Théâtre Jacques Lecoq. Awards NEA Fellowship in Literary Translation.
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AETNA NEW VOICES FELLOW 2018: MFONISO UDOFIA

The Aetna New Voices Fellowship provides an opportunity for innovative playwrights of diversity and color to develop new work and become engaged in the Greater Hartford community. The program includes the commissioning of a new play, along with developmental readings and workshops, and working with Hartford Stage’s Education department to mentor teen artists. The 2018 Fellow is Mfoniso Udofia.

Mfoniso, a first-generation Nigerian-American storyteller and educator, attended Wellesley College and obtained her MFA in Acting from the American Conservatory Theater. During her stay in the Bay, she co-pioneered a youth initiative, The Nia Project, providing artistic outlets for youth residing in Bayview Huntspoint. She is the recipient of the 2017 Helen Merrill Playwright Award and the 2017-2018 McKnight National Residency and Commission at The Playwrights’ Center in Minneapolis. Mfoniso’s plays have been developed at and/or presented/produced by The New York Theatre Workshop, The Playwrights Realm, The Magic Theatre, Dr. Barbara Ann Teer’s National Black Theatre, Hedgebrook, Sundance Theatre Lab, NNPN, Space on Ryder Farm, NNPN New Play Showcase, Makehouse, Soul Productions, terraNOVA, I73, The New Black Fest, Rising Circle’s INKTank, At Hand Theatre Company, The Standard Collective, American Slavery Project, Liberation Theatre Company, and more. For the last several years, she has been crafting the Ufot Cycle, a planned series of nine plays looking at the history of Nigerian immigration in America through the eyes of one family. These interrelated plays include Sojourners, runboyrun, and Her Portmanteau, which was developed in 2015 at the National Black Theatre. Her commission for Hartford Stage will be part of this cycle.

PAST AETNA NEW VOICES FELLOWS
Past fellows include Matthew Lopez, whose two-part play The Inheritance recently won the Olivier Award for Best Play and will be opening on Broadway this fall; Kaneza Schaal, whose Jack & just completed a national tour, and Quiara Alegría Hudes, who won the 2012 Pulitzer Prize for Water by the Spoonful.

Aetna has been the sole funder of this remarkable program since 2004. Aetna’s mission is to build a healthier world—one person, one community at a time. Their team of nearly 50,000 employees is committed to providing access to affordable, high-quality health care, and making the health care experience simpler and more responsive.
Hartford Stage enters its 56th season beginning an exciting new chapter. Newly-appointed Artistic Director Melia Bensussen and Managing Director Cynthia Rider will continue the theatre’s legacy of artistic excellence by creating theatrical works that enlighten, entertain, and educate.

Renowned for producing innovative revivals of classics, as well as provocative new plays and musicals, Hartford Stage has earned many of the nation’s most prestigious awards, including the 1989 Tony Award for Outstanding Regional Theatre. Additional national recognition includes honors from the Outer Critics Circle, Drama Desk, American Theatre Wing (OBIE), and the New York Critics Circle. Hartford Stage has produced over 80 world and North American premieres, including high-profile transfers like American Theatre Wing (OBIE), and the New York Critics Circle.

Hartford Stage has produced over 80 world and North American premieres, including the musical Anastasia, which enjoyed a two-year run on Broadway; A Gentleman’s Guide to Love and Murder, winner of four 2014 Tony Awards, including Best Musical; and Quiara Alegría Hudes’ Water by the Spoonful, winner of the 2012 Pulitzer Prize for Drama. Other notable premieres include The Engagement Party, Make Believe, The Age of Innocence, and Best Direction of a Musical.

Guided by some of the nation’s most notable playwrights, Hartford Stage has produced new works by Samuel Baum; An Opening in Time by Christopher Shinn; The Flamingo Kid; and Keith Reddin, and starring Kevin Bacon; and Innocence by Sarah Gancher; Enchanted April; The Orphans’ Home Cycle; Make Believe by Bess Wohl; and Breath & Imagination by Daniel Beaty. Nationally-renowned titles include The Adventures of Tom Sawyer, A Christmas Carol, A Midsummer Night’s Dream, Noises Off!, To Kill a Mockingbird, the Brand:NEW Festival of New Work, Antony & Cleopatra, Snow Falling on Cedars, The Crucible, The Tempest, Twelfth Night, Hamlet, Anastasia, The Comedy of Errors, The Age of Innocence, Henry V and The Flamingo Kid.

The Hartt School/Hartford Stage Partnership in Training

Now in its fifteenth year, The Hartt School/Hartford Stage Partnership in Training offers a unique alliance of an undergraduate acting conservatory program and a respected professional theatre—one of only two such collaborations in the country. This partnership helps ensure that acting students at the Hartt School receive rigorous training and bring their skills, imagination and intellect to the demands of a professional theatre setting. Hartford Stage staff and guest artists lead classes and workshops and faculty and students appear in Hartford Stage productions. Hartt students have been seen in The Adventures of Tom Sawyer, A Christmas Carol, A Midsummer Night’s Dream, Noises Off!, To Kill a Mockingbird, the Brand:NEW Festival of New Work, Antony & Cleopatra, Snow Falling on Cedars, The Crucible, The Tempest, Twelfth Night, Hamlet, Anastasia, The Comedy of Errors, The Age of Innocence, Henry V and The Flamingo Kid.

The University of Massachusetts Graduate Internships at Hartford Stage

Linking one of the most respected graduate programs in theatre with the Tony Award winning Hartford Stage, the University of Massachusetts Graduate Internships give Master of Fine Arts students in design, directing and dramaturgy the opportunity to work alongside the country’s most exciting artists. The Graduate Internships provide a valuable professional training ground for students and are a natural complement to the practical, hands-on approach of UMass’ graduate program. In turn, Hartford Stage is enriched by the participation of the next generation of theatre artists. UMass students have worked on Boeing-Boeing, Zerline’s Tale, Gee’s Bend, Motherhood Out Loud, The Adventures of Tom Sawyer, Snow Falling on Cedars, The 39 Steps, Macbeth, Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike, and Hedda Gabler.

Capital Community College

This season will mark the eighth season of the One Play Program—a partnership between Hartford Stage and Capital Community College, designed to give the entire college community the opportunity to come together around one play each semester. In addition to offering discounted tickets for students and faculty, the program also brings members of each production’s creative team to the College to interact with students. Last season, 625 Capital students saw a performance at Hartford Stage, many reporting it was their first time at the theatre. This season’s One Play productions are Henry V and Detroit ’67. During the 2017-2018 academic year, in partnership with Hartford Stage and other Hartford theatre companies, Capital began to offer a new associate’s degree in theatre.
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