WORK FORCE
In Globe's musical ode to toil, the unsung take a bow

By James Hebert
THEATER CRITIC

The stage manager has managed to make it cohere. The dressers (and the dressing rooms) are part of the set dressing. The band is out of the pit and into the action; the actors share the spotlight with the crew.

The Old Globe Theatre’s production of the musical “Working,” which opens this week, does more than tell stories about Americans on the job. It shows Americans on the job, Working to put on “Working.”

The concept of pulling back the curtain on the show’s own workings — of “exposing the bones of the production,” as director Gordon Greenberg puts it — is not meant as some postseason grumble.

“It drives home the point that (a show) is created by hundreds of people, really,” Greenberg says. “From the person who designed and printed the program you’re holding, to the person who folded the seat you’re sitting in, to the person who sweeps the carpet you’re walking down, to all of the people onstage.”

The idea also puts the musical in tune with the work. It’s named after the 1974 Studs Terkel book whose matter-of-fact mouthful of a subtitle — “People Talk About What They Do All Day and How They Feel About What They Do” — defines the meaning of the piece.

Terkel, the scruffy Chicago writer who died last year at age 96, interviewed dozens of working Americans for the book, from waitresses to janitors. Stephen Schwartz, the composer who’s now best-known for the massive hit “Wicked,” adapted those stories for a Broadway musical (with additional songs by James Taylor and others) that ran for only 34 performances in 1978 but has stayed alive on the regional and school circuit.

Greenberg, who directed a revival of Schwartz’s “The Baker’s Wife” four years ago, is working on a revival, too.

*Working* is in previews; opens Thursday, July 3. Showtimes: Thursdays-Sundays, 7:30 p.m.; Saturdays, 2 and 7:30 p.m.; Sundays, 2 and 7:30 p.m. through April 12. Prices: $35-$75. Tickets: (619) 255-5200. Globe box office: TheOldGlobe.org
Characters yearn for meaning in their existence.

ago, decided to revisit and revolve "Working" with new interviews and a different, stripped-down, transparent look. His adaptation, which premiered at Arena Repertory Theatre in Florida last year, adds several new characters, partly from the original and updates others. A 507s CEO becomes a 21st-century hedge fund manager, for example.

It also adds two new songs by Lin-Manuel Miranda, the mastermind behind the current Tony Awards-winning musical "In the Heights." Miranda's popular hit "Somebody" is the "my first 9/11" role. Though the show chronicles people at different stages of their careers, 'this is the entry-level, minimum-wage, 'This job stinks' job. Which we've all had.' His other song, "A Very Good Day," is a duet between a care worker in a senior-difficulty home and a nanny, both immigrants. Miranda did his own interviews with those characters' realistic counterparts to work up ideas.

The song about "the complexity of doing jobs no one else wants to do—which is sort of every immigrant's leg up in this country—but even further complicated by doing the jobs someone's own family doesn't want to do."

For Greenberg, the key part of the updating was "thinking about what was period-specific about the original version, and maintaining that which was human and at the core of each of these people."

"Ultimately, every one of these people who was interviewed by Sauls Terkel was yearning for relevance and for meaning in their daily existence. And to make a lasting impression on the world. To make a difference."

That goes, Greenberg be-

loves, for those making the show happen as well. Not just the six actors putting their hearts into the piece, but the people whose playgoers don't usually see. At various times during "Working," the stage manager and other backstage crew be visible to the Globe audience, calling cues, running costumes and generally getting on with the intricate labor of creating a work of theater. It's an understanding of how many people have to be in one place, on the same page at the exact time, for this magical thing to happen, as Greenberg puts it.

James Herbert (617) 293-3040 jim.herb@globe.com
WHY IT'S WORK AND WHY IT'S FUN

GORDON GREENBERG
Present position: Director
First job: At age 12, sold a lemon aid "in Working". 
Worst job: Producer and director of commercials, for an agency. It wasn't so much the job as the setting; Greenberg recalls sitting down in his cubicle, looking up at the fluorescent lights, then thinking, "Why am I trying to spend the bulk of my life here?"
His hobby: "I read a little panic-stick. I took the elevator down and walked around the block about five times and breathed and got through it."

This is what he works: "It's really a well-known fact that not an easy way to make a living. Four is the most lucrative. They used to say you can't make a living in the theater but you can make a living. The challenging parts are away from home — you miss your friends, your relationships and your family. You are constantly needing to keep your projects alive. Making sure they're still relevant, artful and commercial. And making sure you're keeping everyone happy!"

This is what it is, but it's mostly storytelling. And I love seeing the power of storytelling with an audience and the power of being a part of a big group and experiencing something together, which is why theater is so essential." 

LIN-MANUEL MIRANDA
Present position: Co-writer
First job: At age 12, worked for the "Children's Hour" on a TV station in Manila, Philippines (his home country), for $15 a week.
Worst job: "If you're a 12-year-old and you're not interested in the world, you're walking on the pavement with a TV camera on your head. It's kind of what they talk about in the show — the lack of recognition. People kind of look over, they don't see you. One time, a drunk guy took the headcam with him when she needed it. I ran after him for the tape, and a guy at the bar said, "Nah baby, run after that guy!

"In the Heights" creator Lin-Manuel Miranda, a "Working" contributor, got his start at McDonald's. Aren't miracles once a week? As a composer, Miranda works way, way overtime; he's doing six hours on "In the Heights" and the time between its conception when he was still a student at Wesleyan College, and its Broadway debut.

This is what it is: "Having a musical is like having a baby. We're that village that raised it and we're going to take care of it for the rest of its life. And then it's all on whether it's on the way. It's "very exciting." It's the passion of being a part of a big group and experiencing something together, which is why theater is so essential."

MARK HARTMAN
Present position: Music director
First job: Pianist and piano at age 10 in the north Carolina Baptist church where his father was a minister.
Worst job: "I was a music director of a community theater in the city. We had a show called "In the Heights". I was supposed to be playing the piano and singing and when I got there, I was suppose to be playing the guitar. I had never played the guitar before, so I was just standing there with the guitar and I was supposed to be singing. I was just standing there looking around and thinking, "What am I doing here?"

Music director of the hit "Hamilton" on Broadway, "You do what?" But there are similarities to every other job on the planet. It's a group of people getting together to make a product. What we make happens to be a play.

This is what it is: "The most satisfying thing has been working with actors to create an out-of-the-ordinary voice that is captured for their time. It's a group of people working together and finding a key or arrangement or a moment in the song that allows them to shine both as singers and actors."

DAN RODROOFF
Present position: Stage manager
First job: Stallman and working as a prop boy in a Drama Theater in Manhattan.
Worst job: "I was an intern at the National Theater in New York City. I was the stage manager for a production of "In the Heights". It was a disaster. The whole thing fell apart and we had to start from scratch."

This is what it is: "It's a good job. It's a challenging job. It's not a job you can do alone. It's a job you have to be part of a team. People say it's not a glamorous job, but it's a job that's worth doing. I love the fact that I get to work with people who are passionate about theater and who want to make a difference."
ARTS

On-the-job training
The Old Globe Theatre's production of the musical "Working" does more than tell stories about Americans on the job. It shows the behind-the-scene folks working to put on "Working."
PLAYBILL

CRITIC'S CHOICE

"Working" The latest version of Stephen Schwartz and Co.'s take on Studs Terkel's work has a swell set, fine cast and an ace band. But the story (about Americans and their jobs) can stray into cliché and mistiring satire, and the music—though it features two good new tunes by Lin-Manuel Miranda of "In the Heights"—tends to have its Birkenstocks planted firmly in '70s soft-rock. (James Hebert) The Old Globe, 1363 Old Globe Way, Balboa Park. Through April 11. 619-234-5623 theoldglobe.org. $53-$79.

"Opus" The bickering musicians of Michael Hollinger's play manage to make some sweet music, and so does the Globe with Kyle Donnelly's smart, involving and (there come the puns) expertly tuned production of the work about a string quartet coming unstrung. As sheer entertainment, the show is just about note-perfect. (James Hebert) Copley Auditorium, M50 El Prado, Balboa Park. Through April 26. 619-234-5623 theoldglobe.org. $29-$59.
For some theaters, tough times are a time to ‘Rock’

By James Hibbert
THEATER CRITIC

Here’s what’s come to, at this mid-
donwurn moment in history: Karl Marx’s political-economic tract “Das Kapital,” turned into a play. And not just any play: a Broadway-months-and-still-running musical.

Before you begin dreaming up snappy lyrics to rhyme with “bourgeoisie, though, there’s one other thing: ‘The show is happening in China. (It hits the boards in Shanghai next year.)

Here are the other two things: theater is grappling with the economic crash in its own, somewhat contradictory way. On Broadway, it seems as though things are back on track (or never left) — except shows like “The Lion King” still pull in $1 million plus a week, box office remains strong overall and the recession hasn’t slowed the pace of openings.

See Theater, E10

THEATER
CONTINUED FROM E1

Hard times are a time to ‘dust off’ classic pieces

But locally, theater companies are both feeling the effects of the downturn more acutely and, in some cases, responding to the issues it raises more timidly.

For many, the crisis brings up a tricky philosophical issue: Do audiences want (and need) plays that take their minds as far as possible from thoughts of foreclosures and bank failures? Or is it better to face those hardships straight up and give theatergoers a chance for some distraction and catharsis?

One local company reveals its answer today: A production of "The Cradle Will Rock," Marc Blitzstein’s classic story of corruption and greed, which tumultuous first staging (in 1937) was a drama all its own.

Stone Soup Theatre is presenting the seldom-seen work at the North Avenue Theatre downtown, and it’s perhaps the first local show to be conceived specifically as a response to the financial fiasco.

"It goes one way or the other," says Lindsay Doerre (Geerhart), who is directing the work. "You either meet the crisis head on — you confront it, deal with it, examine it. Or you decide people are just looking for comedy entertainment to get their minds off things. "We choose to do the former."

Shut down

Blitzstein wrote the sharp-tongued musical as part of the Depression-era Federal Theatre Project, a government-funded initiative that sprang from President Franklin D. Roosevelt’s New Deal.

But the loan category — which pits a working-class man against the wicked boss Mr. Mister, and depicts community members as struggling themselves to those in power — didn’t go over so well with all concerned. On the day of the play’s opening, the company found the doors to the theater padlocked; the production had been shut down, a victim of (highly politicized) budget cuts.

Owen Wiles, the director, and John Houkman, the producer, nevertheless managed to pull off an impromptu, bare-bones staging at another theater, with performers delivering lines from the audience so as not to break actors’ union rules. (That spectacle was memorialized in Tim Robbins’ 1998 film, "Crade Will Rock.")

The play’s subversive subject, "It’s very funny, surprisingly," says Doerre. "But it also confronts these issues and hopefully will make people think.

"I hope we’ll see more of that in theater’s seasons as people start to plan for (the rest of) 2009 and 2010, now that we know what the (economic) situation will be."

The planning is in the tough part. Most theaters, particularly larger ones, assemble their seasons months in advance (or in some cases more than a year), which makes it hard to respond quickly to what’s happening in the world. Yet now, and then, luck (or maybe subconscious intuition) intervene.

San Diego Repertory Theatre just closed a successful run of Bertold Brecht/Kurt Weill classic "The Threepenny Opera," whose themes of greed and poverty proved timely in tune with the moment. (It so happens that Brecht helped inspire Blitzstein to write "The Cradle Will Rock,")

But the Rep’s just announced 2009-10 season doesn’t include any obvious artistic nods to recession, even though for budget reasons the shows mostly lean toward the lean.

"To be honest with you, the season is not a response to the recession, I can say that," artistic director San Woodhouse says. He adds with a laugh: "No more than the programming of The Threepenny Opera was the anticipation of a recession."

Certainly don’t know what America will be like in the fall and winter of 2009. And there are many people like me.

Case in point: The Old Globe Theatre is currently staging a revamped version of the musical "Working," a show about Americans and their jobs that comes complete with a downsized cast.

Last spring, when the potentially Broadway-bound show was scheduled, "we knew the economy in San Diego was faltering," says Louis G. Spatafora, the Globe’s CEO/executive producer.

"We certainly knew the real estate market was faltering. We knew we were heading into potentially troubled times. So, the idea of bastardizing in a piece about working men and women did seem right for the time.

"But I had no idea how right it would be."
DETAILS
"The Cradle Will Rock"
Stone Soup Theatre
When: Thursday-Saturday, 8 p.m.; Sunday, 7 p.m.; through April 26
Where: Tenth Avenue Theatre, 930 10th Ave., downtown
Tickets: $15; online; no theater tickets, pay-what-you-can
Phone: (619) 207-5065
Online: stonesouptheatre.net

Spisto adds that while the Globe — one of the largest regional theaters in the country — is mindful of the Zeitgeist, "I don't think we go out with a different orientation to what we do" based on what's happening at any given moment.

"We're always trying to serve San Diego. I think that's the strategy."

Sense of timing
La Jolla Playhouse, the county's other regional-theater powerhouse, showed an uncertain sense of timing last fall when it opened the Depression-era drama "Tobacco Road" — another show that had been scheduled long beforehand.

"I was writing my letter for the "Tobacco Road" program the day Lehman Bros. went under," recalls Christopher Ashley, the Playhouse's artistic director.

For its recently announced 2009-10 season, the Playhouse was to have staged a workshop of the dully comic musical "The Houdini Proxy," based on the Coen Bros. movie about corporate intrigue. But that show, originally announced as part of the Playhouse's 2009-2010 season, was just postponed — for budget reasons.

Still, like Gearhart, Ashley believes that continuing tough times instead of relying on them may be the right move for theaters and their audiences. After all, in its original 1930s version, the often grim "Tobacco Road" was a long-running hit.

"I think what people want most in times like this is to be together, experiencing some-thing in a group," Ashley says.

"Whether it's a serious play or a comic play, I think it's the very fact of being in a theater together that makes a difference.

"Whatever the tone of the entertainment, I think this is a great moment to make art. Because people are hungry for it."

Rebecca Johansen, Stone Soup's artistic director, says that hunger could prove a boon to theater by inspiring artists to revive more forgotten works.

"I think it offers an opportunity to dust off some of the classic pieces that maybe nobody here in San Diego has been exposed to do before," she says. "There's a real opportunity there, especially if we find plays that we can strip down to their basic elements, and produce them at relatively low cost. Then, we can start to open our doors to a broader audience."

Stone Soup is already taking a step toward that kind of outreach with "The Cradle Will Rock" by offering tickets at the door on a pay-what-you-can basis (a concept also embraced in a big way recently by downtown's San Diego Repertory and Vail Arts).

"Gearhart says it's also a good time to remember that hard times have a funny way of reminding people what it means to live in a free society.

"Economic crisis aside, we have a president who was elected on the platform that everyone has the power to create change," Gearhart notes. "That message is there in (the 'Cradle') as well. It's sort of the everyman versus the big, bad fox-cat.

'It's not a sort of 'we are so poor' poverty tale; people can go to this show and feel maybe they can take this on. They can get through this OK. If we all work together, it's possible to combat this and triumph over it."

'I don't know how we'll get through a crisis like this if we don't keep that kind of hope alive."

In its humble way, that spirit might just prove more powerful than a chorus line of Karl Marxes.
ARTS LETTERS

‘Working’ did not work for her

I just saw a production of the Old Globe’s “Working.” At the end of the lively musical, the audience gave the players a standing ovation. People beamed and cheered. I, however, had almost walked out halfway through, and left disgruntled.

The cast is superb, the scenery wonderful ... and the message lost. I have read Studs Terkel’s book, and I saw the original adaptation. Both were permeated with the tone that reverberates through the final number: that all work is worthy and that people have dignity in their jobs, whether that’s putting up the steel beams or waiting tables with flair. Much of this current adaptation, however, directly contradicts that message. We laugh, for example, at the tech support guy, not with him. Few of the newer jobs are represented with the respect accorded that of the stonemason. One might argue that the inconsistency is deliberate; that indeed our attitude toward work has changed. I was willing to test this hypothesis, but found it didn’t hold up. There is, simply, a disconnect between the original theme and those added characters who are now stereotyped objects of mockery. I keep asking the same questions raised in James Herbert’s review (“‘Working’ update tries hard, shows labor pains,” Smart Living, March 14): Why does a visually dazzling show so focused on real people still stray into cliche? Why does a piece that seeks to honor American workers seem, now and then, to satirize them?

Why did no one at the Globe notice that a tribute to American workers, when most needed, has been translated into a joke at their expense? And why didn’t the rest of the audience feel Studs Terkel rolling in his grave?

Patricia Vreeland, Bay Park
QUICK TAKES

Reworked 'Working’ due

A new version of "Working," the musical based on Studs Terkel's iconic book about Americans and their day-to-day jobs, will be the final offering in the Old Globe's previously announced 2008-09 subscription season.

Adapted by Stephen Schwartz ("Wicked") and Nina Faso, "Working" will run March 12 to April 13, newly "re-imagined" by Schwartz and director Gordon Greenberg. It will include added songs by Lin-Manuel Miranda, composer and lead actor for "In the Heights," which won the Tony Award's 2008 best musical in addition to four other awards.

—LYNNE HEFFLEY
‘Working’ getting a workover at Old Globe

Pam Keaven
State Worker

As America enters the
sharpest economic downturn
since the Great Depression,
the value of an honest day’s
work has never been more
important.

“Working”
When: None. See
next week. April 25;
4 p.m. Saturday, 8 p.m. Saturday.

Where: Old Globe Theatre, San

That’s fortunate
for the return of
“Working,” a
reimagined
version of the
1978 Stephen Schwartz
musical about hard
working Americans
talking about the
jobs they love, the hate and
the desire to change them.

“Working” opens Saturday at the Old
Globe in a production that director Gary Greenberg
describes as a “complete re-
thinking” of the original
musical.

“Working,” which had a
brief 25-performance run in
its Broadway debut 34 years
ago, was adopted by Schwartz
and Nina Faso from the best-
selling nonfiction book by
Studs Terkel, which
documented the stories of real-life
everyday working Americans.
The musical had a score by
Schwartz, pop star James
Taylor and several other
songwriters.

But in the working world,
nothing ever stands still. In the
mid-’70s there were no
home computers, cell phones
or a global digital marketplace.
So the characters in the musical —
from a telephone switchboard
operator to a born-again hippie,
a bartender and a truck-driver-
tune-matching migrant farm-
worker — quickly grew
dated, and the musical fell into
obscurity.

Then a few years ago,
Schwartz and Greenberg
decided to take a fresh look at
“Working.” Even though the
jobs have changed, the way
Americans feel about their
jobs has not, so the merits of
their stories remained
powerful, Greenberg said.

When we went back and
looked at it, we learned that
it’s not the job, it’s the
person.

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“Working”
Continued from D

of the person that we connect
with,” Greenberg said.

“There’s a deep well of
humanity in the everyday
people of this country. We
realized we could bring the
words and the core humanity of the
characters but put them in a
modern context.”

Schwartz and Greenberg
enshrined every one of the 28
characters in the show to see
whether they and their jobs
were still relevant like
Terkel, they went on and
conducted their own interviews,
talking to everyone from
the inventors of the Segway
to a supermarket
scanning technician. Then, they
brought in songwriter Lin-
Manuel Miranda (writer of
Tony-winning “In The
Height”) to contribute
contemporary songs about
today’s workplace.

Greenberg describes the
musical’s new characters as
“decontextualized.” The female
telephone operator

who loves to talk but has
morphed into a male
telephone service rep in India.
The Mexican farmworker has
been expanded into two
characters — a Latino farm
and a Latino home health
care worker (who sings about
doing “the job no one wants to do”).
And the corporate
billionaire has turned into a
Wall Street hedge fund man-
ager.

Still intact are the characters of
Kate the housekeeper (now
a “paycheck-to-paycheck”
mother), the prostitute Rita, the
skinny-waisted Dolores, and the
third-generation steelworker
Mike, among many others,
but their lives have been
modernized where necessary.

Another adaptation to
modern times is a rethinking of
the musical’s due for modern
budget realities. “Working”
was originally written
for 13 to 20 actors, but the
Old Globe’s version will now
just six actors and plenty
multiple roles. And the show’s
design will be bare bones — the
audience will see the actor’s
dressing tables, where they watch
the actors transform themselves
from one character to another
with the help of a visible
stage manager.

“It will be a celebration of
the craft of theater, exposing
the limits of the production
to show the working people
who make theater happen
backstage,” Greenberg said.

The newly refined version
of “Working” had its
premiere last summer in
San Francisco. Los Angeles and
the Old Globe’s executive
producer saw it there and
wanted to bring it to San
Diego for further development.
Schwartz arrived this week
for a conference at the Old
Globe and will be working on
the show right up until opening
inght. He’ll also headline a
one-night concert next
Monday featuring music from
some of his more famous
musicals (including “Wicked,”
“Pippin” and, of course,
“Working”).

Spath said he’s excited to
bring this re-envisioned “Working”
to the Globe audience.

“It’s a piece that speaks to
our time,” he said.
ARMS NEWS

Wizard behind ‘Wicked’ booked for benefit concert at the Globe

The composer-lyricist behind the Oz-inspired musical “Wicked” will blow into town (without benefit of tornado) this spring for a one-night performance benefiting the Old Globe Theatre.

Stephen Schwartz, who scored the Tony-winning show that chronicles the back story of the “Wizard of Oz” witches, comes to the theater March 7 for “Stephen Schwartz and Friends,” a concert of his music that also will include singer-actors Debbie Gravitte, Liz Callaway and Scott Coulter.

Globe executive producer/CEO Louis G. Spisto licensed the one-night event, the Globe hosted this year featuring Jerry Herman, who scored such hits as “Hello, Dolly!” and “Mame.”

The Schwartz show, though, will feature solo performances, with no interview segments, he said.

“It’s just an incredibly rare treat to hear this man perform his work,” said Spisto. “Stephen is a powerhouse. He’s very much in his prime, but he’s absolutely a legend.”

By this time next year, Schwartz’s “Working” will be a familiar place to Schwartz, whose work also includes “Godspell” and “Pippin” on Broadway and three Oscars for the Disney films “Pocahontas” and “The Prince of Egypt.”

Schwartz is bringing an updated version of his musical “Working” to the theater, featuring new songs by Manuel Lin-Miranda, the composer and actor behind “In the Heights,” this year’s Tony-winner for best musical. “Working,” based on the late Studs Terkel’s book about Americans and their jobs, runs March 6 to April 26.

Tickets for “Stephen Schwartz and Friends” are now available for Globe 2009 season subscribers, and go on sale Feb. 8 to the general public. Prices are $49-$79 ($139 for tickets that include a post-show meet-and-greet with the composer). For info: (619) 234-
Workers of world, unite! (for ‘Working’)!

A re-imagining of a durable and widely produced musical will fill the final slot of the Old Globe Theatre’s 2008-09 subscription season. The Balboa Park theater has announced it will stage Stephen Schwartz’s updating of “Working,” based on the Studs Terkel book about Americans and their jobs. The show will run March 11 to April 26.

The pared-down version of the 1977 musical had a cast of six portraying 26 characters. It has two new songs by Mark. J. Moran, the key composer who behind the current Tony-nominated hit “In the Heights.”

Schwartz, who directed and co-created the original production, is best known for his work on “Wicked,” he premiered the updated “Working” recently at the Ahmanson Theatre in Minneapolis.

“We’re delighted to help them re-imagine this work,” said Louis G. Spisto, the Globe’s CEO/executive producer. “It’s a terrific piece that I think is even more timely than it was in the late 70s when it premiered.

“We are a lot from the (presidential) candidates about hardworking Americans. And this show is a musical examination of the lives and emotions of hardworking Americans — our relationships with our work, and our relationships with the people around us through our work.”

The show’s creators, Spisto added, “have their minds on a Broadway production” of the musical. The Globe, though, is staging the show itself rather than take on producing partners.

The Globe also announced it will present Jerry Herman’s Broadway, “a one-night show featuring the composer-hyricist behind ‘Hello, Dolly!’ ‘Mame’ and other hits.” Herman will take the stage with several performers, a pianist and a master of ceremonies for the event, taking place at 7:30 p.m. Aug. 23.

Tickets for the Herman show are $49 to $75, and go on sale July 7 (immediately for Globe subscribers). Tickets information: (619) 234-5220 or TheOldGlobe.org.

Grant to film nonprofit

Media Arts Center San Diego, the community organization behind San Diego’s Golden Hill neighborhood’s annual Latino Film Festival, has been awarded a $7,500 grant from the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences.

The Academy awarded a total of $80,000 to support nonprofit organizations throughout the United States and Canada from the AMPAS Film & Television Archive at the Visual Effects Society in Hollywood.

“Our primary goal is to increased access to professional opportunities in the motion picture industry,” said grants committee chair Andrew Marlowe.

That, too, is the goal of the Media Arts Center, which in its mission statement notes, “The organization works closely with underserved teens in the local community, teaching them media literacy and creating local documentaries.”

The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences grants will go specifically in a monthly film-making film program to be presented beginning in August at Balboa Mission Valley that includes presentation by the filmmakers and workshops.

“The local Latino population is 30 percent,” said Blythe von Thomas, executive director and founder of the Media Arts Center. “They should be able to see a film about their culture and their history.

3 But you don’t have to be a film to get a film program. The first program to be screened Aug. 22 is ‘Prefersendos’ (‘Many Moods’) from Chile with the Mexican War Barbara Matt. Information: (619) 234-5220.

3 3 3
Variety will be the spice of touring-show season

By James Hebert

SAN DIEGO UNION-TRIBUNE
January 11, 2009

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'Spamalot' opens the new season in September

The show is the first hip-hop musical to hit Broadway and while some of its references are New York-specific, Miranda says its themes of gentrification and communities in upheaval should feel familiar all over the country.

The very sexted (the term), Miranda said by phone from New York, "We've already begun planning the set design for the tour, and it's a chance to go back and tweak stuff."

Mira...
Jazz greats join Coastal Cities gig

Guests perform at the New York City Jazz at the Harford Arts Center this week. The lineup for the Harford Arts Center in the Harford Arts Center is

The New York City Jazz at the Harford Arts Center on Thursday, featuring several of the best jazz artists in the country. The lineup for this week includes:

- New York, New York with Wynton Marsalis
- The Count Basie Orchestra
- The Duke Ellington Orchestra
- The Marsalis Sextet
- The New York City Jazz at the Harford Arts Center Orchestra

Tickets are available at the door or online at harfordartscenter.org. Proceeds from the event will benefit the Harford Arts Center Foundation.
Old Globe Re-Works Musical *Working*,
Opening March 12

By Kenneth Jones
12 Mar 2009

*Working*, the 1978 Broadway musical that gives voice to the average American worker, opens in a freshened production March 12 at San Diego's Old Globe Theatre after previews from March 7.

This reconceived version of the revue has new contributions director Gordon Greenberg, Stephen Schwartz — the show's original co-creator — and Tony Award winning songwriter Lin-Manuel Miranda.

The Old Globe produces the staging through April 12.
*The populist musical has been re-imagined by Schwartz and Greenberg, with new songs added by Miranda, the Tony Award-winning composer and original star of Broadway's current hit musical *In the Heights.*

*Working* — based on the book by Studs Terkel, adapted by Stephen Schwartz (*Wicked*) and Nina Faso — features Adam Monley as Man #1, Nehal Joshi as Man #2, Wayne DuVall as Man #3, Marie-France Arcilla as Woman #1, Danielle Lee Greaves as Woman #2 and Donna Lynne Champlin as Woman #3.

According to The Old Globe, "This beloved musical, based on the writings of Pulitzer Prize-winning author and celebrated radio personality Studs Terkel, remains a witty and unusually timely commentary on how work defines one's self-worth and connection to community. This musical exploration of people’s feelings about their day-to-day existence features characters from all walks of life, ranging from trucker to housewife, waitress to corporate executive, fireman to schoolteacher — 26 in all. All of their songs, in which they describe their daily routines and discuss their hopes and aspirations, are true stories derived from Terkel's interviews with actual members of the workforce."

The score includes music and lyrics by Stephen Schwartz, James Taylor, Lin-Manuel Miranda, Micki Grant, Mary Rodgers, Craig Carnelia, Susan Birkenhead, Matt Landers and Graciela Daniele.

The 2009 production is headed by director Greenberg, who tested this new version at Asolo Repertory Theatre in Sarasota, FL, in 2008, with a slightly different cast of six; Arcilla, Greaves and Joshi are holdovers. (The show's original Broadway cast numbered 17 in 1978.)

His San Diego team includes Joshua Rhodes (choreographer), Mark Hartman (musical director/conductor), Alex Lacamoire (orchestrator), Beowulf Boritt (scenic design), Mattie Ullrich (costume design), Jeff Croiter (lighting design), Tony Smolenski IV (sound design), Aaron Rhyne (projection designer) and Dan Rosokoff (stage manager).

Schwartz has contributed music and/or lyrics to *Godspell, Pippin, The Magic Show, The Baker’s Wife,* *Working* (which he also adapted and directed), *Personal, Rags, Children Of Eden* and the current Broadway hit, *Wicked.* He collaborated with Leonard Bernstein on the English texts for Bernstein's *MASS* and wrote the title song for the play and movie *Butterflies Are Free.* For children, he has written a one-act musical, *Captain Louie.* For films, he collaborated with Alan Menken on the scores for the Disney animated features "Pocahontas" and "The Hunchback of Notre Dame" and wrote the songs for the DreamWorks animated feature "The Prince of Egypt." He provided music and lyrics for the original television musical, "Geppetto," and has released two CDs of new songs entitled "Reluctant Pilgrim" and "Uncharted Territory." Under the auspices of the ASCAP Foundation, he runs musical theatre workshops in New York and Los Angeles, and is also a member of the Council of the Dramatists Guild. Schwartz is the recipient of three Academy Awards, four Grammy Awards and four Drama Desk Awards.

Greenberg directed *Pirates* and *Happy Days,* both for Goodspeed Musicals
and at Paper Mill Playhouse. Happy Days is on tour. Other credits include the acclaimed recent Off-Broadway revival of Jacques Brel... at the Zipper Theatre, The Baker's Wife (Goodspeed & Paper Mill), Cam Jansen by Larry O'Keefe & Nell Benjamin (Lambs Theatre, Theatreworks USA), Assisted Loving (Daryl Roth), O. Henry's Lovers (Goodspeed), Theory of Three (NY Stage and Film), the U.S. national tour of Peter Pan (Big League); Floyd Collins (Signature Theatre), Breaking Up is Hard To Do (Harbor Entertainment), The Velvet Vise with Janeane Garofalo (NY Performance Works), and more.

For ticket information, call (619) 23-GLOBE or visit www.TheOldGlobe.org.

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The Tony Award-nominated Working originally had its start at the Goodman Theatre in Chicago and — despite its short Broadway run (one month) — has been a cult hit for years, enjoying a wide life in regional theatres.

The new production seeks to reveal the mechanics of the theatre production — exposing the stage manager and crew, for example.

Greenberg said in a 2008 statement, "Stephen and I have been talking about doing a pared down production of Working for the past eight years... Using only six transformative actors, the idea was to expose the bones of the production itself, allowing the audience a glimpse into the actors', stage manager's and crew's processes. With Lin-Manuel creating additional material and Asolo Rep to launch the new production, we've found the ideal circumstances to finally realize this vision."

In 1978 Working, directed by Schwartz, was nominated for Tony Awards in the following categories: Best Book of a Musical (Schwartz), Best Original Score (lyrics by Craig Carnelia, Micki Grant, Susan Birkenhead, Stephen Schwartz, James Taylor, music by Craig Carnelia, Micki Grant, Mary Rodgers, Stephen Schwartz, James Taylor), Best Featured Actor in a Musical (Steven Boocokov and Rex Everhart), Best Scenic Design (David Mitchell) and Best Lighting Design (Ken Billington).

Songs from the musical have been heard in concerts and cabarets and on recordings. An original cast album preserves the score. A TV version of Working was also seen.

Songs from the original version of the musical include "All the Livelong Day (I Hear America Singing)," "Lovin' Al," "Just a Housewife," "The Mason," "Neat to be a Newsboy," "Nobody Tells Me How," "Millwork," "Joe," "It's an Art," "Cleanin' Women," "Something to Point To," "Un Mejor Dia Vendra," "Brother Tucker," "Fathers and Sons" and "If I Could've Been."

Studs Terkel's book is called "Working: People Talk About What They Do All Day and How They Feel About What They Do."
Re-Worked Working, With New Material by Tony Winner Miranda, Will Play Old Globe

By Kenneth Jones
16 Jun 2009

The Old Globe in San Diego will present the 2009 West Coast premiere of the newly revised version of the 1978 musical Working, with contributions by Tony Award-winning songwriter Lin-Manuel Miranda.

Working, based on the book by Studs Terkel, adapted by Stephen Schwartz (Wicked, Pippin, Godspell) and Nina Fasso, will be directed by Gordon Greenberg (Happy Days, the Musical). The cult-hit Broadway musical revue was recently re-imagined by Schwartz and Greenberg, with new songs added by Miranda, the Tony Award-winning composer and star of Broadway's In the Heights, winner of the 2008 Tony as Best Musical.

Working will run in the Old Globe Theatre March 7–April 12, 2009, opening March 12.

This version of Working was recently produced at Asolo Repertory Theatre in Florida.

According to The Old Globe, "This beloved musical, based on the writings of Pulitzer Prize-winning author and celebrated radio personality Studs Terkel, remains a witty and unusually timely commentary on how work defines one’s self-worth and connection to community. This musical exploration of people’s feelings about their day-to-day existence features characters from all walks of life, ranging from trucker to housewife, waitress to corporate executive, fireman to schoolteacher — 26 in all. All of their songs, in which they describe their daily routines and discuss their hopes and aspirations, are true stories derived from Terkel’s interviews with actual members of the workforce."
With music and lyrics by Stephen Schwartz, James Taylor, Lin-Manuel Miranda, Nicki Grant, Mary Rodgers, Craig Carnelia, Susan Birkenhead, Matt Landers and Graciela Daniele, Working "paints a vivid and original portrait of the American landscape."

"Working is a celebration of the human spirit and the search for meaning, featuring the music of such renowned composers as Stephen Schwartz, James Taylor — and now Lin-Manuel Miranda, one of the hottest new musical theatre composers," stated Old Globe's executive producer Louis Spisto. "Gordon and Stephen have begun a remarkable new journey for Working which will continue at the Globe and, with good fortune, culminate on Broadway. We've heard a lot from the candidates recently about 'hard-working Americans,' and it seems appropriate and timely to revisit this amazing collage of stories. We are particularly thrilled about having Stephen Schwartz in residence at the Globe to continue working on this exciting project."

At Florida's Asolo in recent weeks, the debut of the revamped show (which closed June 8) had a cast of six rather than the original 17, and featured two new songs by Miranda.

Performances began at Asolo May 14. The Florida cast included Liz McCartney (Broadway's Taboo, Mamma Mia!) and Darren Baker (Broadway's Tarzan, Wonderful Town), Marie-France Arcilla, Colin Donnell, Danielle Lee Greaves and Neha Joshi.

The Tony Award-nominated Working originally had its start at the Goodman Theatre in Chicago and — despite its short Broadway run (one month) — has been a cult hit for years, enjoying a wide life in regional theatres.

The new production seeks to reveal the mechanics of the theatre production — exposing the stage manager and crew, for example.

Greenberg said in a statement, "Stephen and I have been talking about doing a pared down production of Working for the past eight years... Using only six transformative actors, the idea was to expose the bones of the production itself, allowing the audience a glimpse into the actors', stage manager's and crew's processes. With Lin-Manuel creating additional material and Asolo Rep to launch the new production, we've found the ideal circumstances to finally realize this vision."

Tony Award nominee and Academy Award winner Schwartz is the composer-lyricist known for Pippin, The Baker's Wife, Wicked and the animated "Hunchback of Notre Dame" and more.

Miranda penned music and lyrics for Broadway's current In the Heights, in which he stars as one of the Latino residents of the Manhattan neighborhood of Washington Heights. He conceived the musical as well. He won the 2008 Tony Award for Best Score.

In 1978 Working, directed by Schwartz, was nominated for Tony Awards in the following categories: Best Book of a Musical (Schwartz), Best Original Score (lyrics by Craig Carnelia, Micki Grant, Susan Birkenhead, Stephen Schwartz, James Taylor, music by Craig Carnelia, Micki Grant, Mary Rodgers, Stephen Schwartz, James Taylor), Best Featured Actor in a Musical (Steven Boockover and Rex Everhart), Best Scenic Design (David Mitchell) and Best Lighting Design (Ken Billington).

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"Brother Tucker," "Fathers and Sons" and "If I Could've Been."

Studs Terkel's book is called "Working: People Talk About What They Do All Day and How They Feel About What They Do."

For more information or to subscribe to The Old Globe's 2008-09 winter season, contact Globe Ticket Services at (619) 23-GLOBE or www.TheOldGlobe.org.


What time is the show?

Browse all News

Keyword: 

Features/Location: All

Writer: All

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Jerry Herman's Broadway and Working Added to Old Globe Schedule

By Dan Bacalzo - Jun 18, 2008 - San Diego

San Diego's Old Globe Theatre has announced two additional shows to its upcoming season.

On August 23, Debbie Gravitte, Jason Graae and Ron Raines will appear in Jerry Herman's Broadway, a tribute to the legendary composer of such shows as Hello, Dolly!, Mame, and La Cage Aux Folles. The evening will be emceed by Michael K ener and feature Don Pippin as musical director.

Meanwhile, a revised version of the musical Working, previously seen at Florida's Asolo Rep, will play March 7-April 12, with an opening on March 12.

Adapted by Stephen Schwartz and Nina Faso from the book by Studs Terkel, the musical was recently re-imagined by Schwartz and director Gordon Greenberg, with new songs added by Lin-Manuel Miranda, the Tony Award-winning composer and star of Broadway's current hit musical In the Heights.

This musical exploration of the people, jobs and feelings of a day-by-day existence features characters from all walks of life, ranging from trucker to housewife, waitress to corporate executive, farmen in schoolteacher. All of their songs, in which they describe their daily routines and discuss their hopes and aspirations, are true stories derived from Terkel's interviews with actual members of the workforce. In addition to Miranda and Schwartz, the musical features songs by James Taylor, Miki Grant, Mary Rodgers, Craig Carnelia, Susan Birkenhead, Matt Landers, and Graciela Daniele.

As previously announced, the Old Globe's 2006-2007 season will also include The Women (September 13-October 26), Six Degrees of Separation (January 15-February 15), and Comet (May 18-June 21) in the Old Globe Theatre; and Back Back Back (September 19-October 26), Once Africa (January 24-March 8), Opus (March 21-April 26) and The Price (May 9-June 14) in the Globe's interim arena stage at the San Diego Museum of Art's James S. Copley Auditorium.

For more information, visit www.TheOldGlobe.org.

Further Reading:
» Donna Lynne Champlin, Danielle Lee Greaves, and More Set for Old Globe's Working [Theater News]
» Working Together [Feature]
» Jennifer Gibbs and Kristin Martin Win Women Working with Women Collaboration Award [Theater News]
» Studs Terkel Dies at 96 [Theater News]

more: Working

Insider Comments:

There are no comments posted yet.

Be the first to comment!

Please login to post!

TOP TEN

1. VIA CINEMA!
Y tu mama tambien, Amores Perros, Pan’s Labyrinth—just three recent blockbuster examples of why cinephiles should check out the 16th annual San Diego Latino Film Festival. It’s 11 days of film buffery, screenings, workshops and, of course, parties (including the kickoff soiree at St. San Diego on March 12). Animation will be a focus this year—including a series of adult memoirs highlighted by 2008 AINIE nominee Sekiusho’s Wondeo. March 12-22. endlessfilm.com.

2. ALL WORTH, ALL PLAY!
Time is ripe for Winning; the pre-we-can classic based on Studs Terkel’s best-selling compilation of little guy chronicles. The plan is also a big stage outing for Terkel, who died last October. What better time for a hoopla-topping exaltation of the American dream? March 7-April 12. Old Globe, 1363 Old Globe Way, 619-294-5629, oldglobetheatre.org.

3. REEVEHAPPY'S SUMO
What powerful Vieuxtemps music publisher Antoine Dufourc孳re a solo in 1819 and asked the world’s great composers to perform it, most puttered up and obeyed. But Beethoven rejected it as a nine-piece set worth his primeval time. Sometimes that changed over the next few years, and the master became obsessed with the piece, creating 83 Variations. Famous director Michael Cimino examined why Beethoven went from uninterested to vaguely OCD. April 8-May 4. La Jolla Playhouse, 3550 La Jolla Village Dr., 858-550-1099, lajollaplayhouse.com.

4. IN FULL BLOOM
The Cedros Avenue Design District in Solana Beach is the go-to spot for interior designers, woodworkers, antique hunters, and all of us laypeople who shop and collect art treasures. No longer time to examine and browse the 85 shops, galleries and boutiques than during "Cedros Avenue Blooms!" a night of music, art, food and, naturally, libations. March 19. 858-755-0444, cedrosavenue.com.

5. FIRST IMPRESSIONS
With lush, sun-drenched postcards straight from the French Riviera and Lake Como, British Neo-Impressionist Kerry Hallam is a regular escape artist. Cruise Prospect Street post-exhibit to explore our own version of the 714. March 6. Martin Lawrence Gallery, 1111 Prospect St., 858-551-1122, martindlawrence.com.

6. SCOUT'S HONOR
Who cares about a few easy percentage points in the approval rating? Obama-rants continue! Warwick’s hosts a book-signing with phenonomenal author Scott Tuohy! The Yes We Can! Barack Obama’s History-Making Presidential Campaign. Starting in 2006, Tuohy journeyed the country with America’s soon-to-be first black president, documenting each step. She’s got more than a few first-person stories to tell about the cucumber-cool leader of the free world. March 24. Warwick’s, 7812 Girard Ave., La Jolla, 858-454-0340, warwick.com.

7. FLOWER POWER
When Oprah needs a dramatic floral cascade, she calls him. When Trump needs to impress the ladies, he calls him. He is Preston Bailey—even designer, author and floral curator to Hollywood. And he makes his first S.D. appearance to showcase 27 years of his organic, fresh and raw designs for some of the world’s most verdant and oversize top social occasions. March 5. Museum of Contemporary Art, La Jolla, 700 Prospect St., 858-454-3541, mcasd.org.

8. STAR’S IN PANTS
Being a celebrity is tough. After a long career of making millions, people pay to watch you swing golf clubs, until there’s a giddy thrill in listening to Ray Romano turn his trips to the rough into pure comedy. The 11th annual San Lupe’s Celebrity Golf Classic features films, TV and movie stars to play golf and raise money for Baby Children’s Hospital. April 21-26. Megan Run Resort & Spa, 5030 Cuenca de Golf, Rancho Santa Fe, 858-756-2471, imprenta.net.

9. FIRST WOMEN
"Mother of the Year" sounds like a lot of pressure to us, but she will be named—along with the other "outstanding" S.D. women who are the most actively trying to build a better city—at the 44th Annual Women of Distinction luncheon. A celebration of seismic seas of selflessness, plus luau! March 16. Hilton San Diego Bayfront, One Park Blvd., 619-446-6275.

10. THE LION’S DEN
The six-man who issued, recorded and essentially lived on the road with legendary jazz bandleader Charles Mingus lives in Kensington. Charles Mingus二期 will join S.D.'s other young jazz lion, trumpeter Gilbert Castellanos (who's played with everyone from Dizzy Gillespie to Nat King Cole), for the best hometown jazz you’ll ever hear. March 28. Anthology, 1837 India St., Little Italy, 619-295-0250.
San Diego Shows Go On

THEATER POLIC, FOR THE MOST PART, do their work more for love than money. Even so, an sliding economy generally brings fewer shows and darkened stages. Broadway, for example, suffered an unusual slump in late 2008, with closings of hit shows that normally would have been kept open to benefit from the holiday tourist season.

Locally, however, our organizations seem to be hanging tough, nourished by new groups like the downtown Theatre ink., which is in its second season of presenting classic works. Established companies are building on their success with presentations in second venues, like Cygnet with the Old Town Theatre, Lamb's Players with the Horton Grand and Broadway/San Diego with the Bahco.

All this activity means that, typically, our new theater year looks to be brighter than ever. Although all full-year schedules haven't been announced, highlights are already evident—including an unusual, direct musical heading for Broadway. It's The First Wives Club, coming to the Old Globe. The revenge-on-exes story, familiar from the popular film, is adapted by Robert Hohler and complemented by music by the famed Motown team of Holland-Dodds and Holland.

The Globe also presents -Mynattic, an update of Stephen Sondheim's musicalization of Sondheim's own to ordinary occupations, with additional songs by James Taylor and Tony winner Lin-Manuel Miranda. Other distinctive tuners around town include Cygnet's Assassins, the controversial Stephen Sondheim-John Weidman re-vue about presidential killers; Broadway/San Diego's offering of A Little Night Music; and the San Diego Rep staging of Brecht's masterpiece The Threepenny Opera.

In the not-exactly-a-musical category, Lamb's re-stages South Pacific, Tim Storer's drama concerning the creation of Handel's Messiah. The play premiered at Lamb's in 1999 and went on to acclaimed productions off-Broadway and around the nation.

We also have a wealth of provocative dramas up- coming, particularly from smaller companies. Coincidentally or not, three concern families coping with the loss of children. North Coast Rep does Rabbit Hole, David Lindsay-Abaire's 2007 Pulitzer Prize winner about the accidental death of a young boy; Duchess Theatre offers Carol Lynn Pearson's Funny East, in which a Mormon couple deals with the suicide of their gay son; and Miscelano Theatre stages Jane Martin's Good Boys, focusing on fathers of sons, one bi and one white, who died in a school shooting.

Less wrenching is the Globe's premiere of Mark O'Conner's Camino, featuring the beauty queen who married George Wallace and became the powerful first lady of Alabama, and North Coast Rep's Behrman, Elia Kazan's posthumous 2007 Pulitzer finalist about a young African-American woman coming of age as the civil rights movement begins.

Lighter brews are on tap as well. Broadway/San Diego brings in Tuna Doozie Haga, the first new show in a decade by the comic team of Jason Wallame and Joe Sears, taking their Tune, Texas, characters to San Diego. Lamb's has again skated the local look of Lavin's Hava, the Spike Lee-Morton comedy about a man's trip back to the family car trips, which got pulled last summer because of a rights conflict. And La Jolla Playhouse concludes its 2008-09 schedule with The Caucasian Chalk Circle, an adventurous prequel to J.M. Barrie's Peter Pan.

One trend likely to continue in the economic squeeze: coproducing. Moxie Theatre, still homeless but always fearless, is doing typically offbeat works: Manka Wegryn's The Brother of Baraboo with Diver- sionary, and Cordial Stivy's The Labyrinth of Desire with Ion Theatre. Diversionary teams with the Black Ensemble Theatre on Ru's Oakley Show's As Much as You Can, a dysfunctional-family comedy centering on a black gay man who brings home his white lover.

ion, by itself, also burnishes its growing reputation with Martin McDonagh's acclaimed dark comedy The Cripple of Inishmaan.

San Diego Magazine
February 2009

For more about local theater companies, go to sandiegomagazine.com/stage.
On stage: “Working”  

Through April 12 at the Old Globe Theatre (234-5623/www.TheOldGlobe.org)  

“Working” is an exploration of one’s self-worth in relation to one’s occupation. How does our sense of self-value derive from our jobs?  

Are we the self-involved egotistical money manager, the joyful waitress happy to serve meals to others because it gives her a chance to share her opinions, the defeated textile worker stuck in a dead-end job where the only visible hope is the end of an eight-hour shift, or the proud construction worker happy to point to his building as real evidence of his impact on the world?  

Each of the 26 jobs in Stephen Schwartz’s musical is based on real interviews with hard-working Americans. Schwartz and his creative team, now including Tony-award winning composer of “In the Heights” Lin-Manuel Miranda, based the text and songs of “Working” on Pulitzer Prize-winning author Studs Terkel’s writings.  

Every one of the 26 characters shares a piece of the American dream; every single person is struggling for something better than what their parents had. Each of the actors is incredibly versatile, playing many different characters. In fact, the small cast of only six is able to fill out the entire nation, with simple costume changes.  

—Marla Patricia Aragon
SERVICE WITH A SONG  Donna Lynne Champlin is a waitress with a flair for the dramatic in "It's an Art," a musical number from the Old Globe Theatre's "Working." The show, based on a book by Studs Terkel, delves into Americans' attitudes about their jobs.
THEATER/DANCE/PERFORMANCE ART

Art/Powers Batkheva Dance Company Manderlell Auditorium at USCD, 9500 Gilman Drive, La Jolla-UTC, 8 pm, Feb. 26, 858-534-4090

"In the Mood: A Swinging '40s Musical Revue" Balboa Theatre, 846 Fourth Ave., Downtown-Gaslamp, 2 pm, Feb. 28, 619-570-1900

"The Threepenny Opera" Lyceum Theatre, 79 Horton Plaza, Downtown-Gaslamp, Feb. 28 - March 29, 619-544-1000

Dance on Camera Film Festival La Paloma Theatre, 477 S. Coast Highway 101, Encinitas. 5 pm, March 1, 760-436-5774

"Grease" San Diego Civic Theatre, 1100 Third Ave., Downtown-Gaslamp, March 3 - March 8, 619-570-1000

"Just Balanchine" Birch North Park Theatre, 2091 University Ave., North Park, March 5 - March 8, 619-239-8800

"War of the Worlds" & "Lost World" California Center for the Arts, Escondido, 740 N. Escondido Blvd., Escondido, 8 pm, March 7, 760-294-5223

"Working" The Old Globe, 1363 Old Globe Way, Balboa Park, March 7 - April 12, 619-234-5623

"High School Musical" 2, David and Dorotha Garfield Theatre, 426 Executive Drive, La Jolla-UTC, March 7 - March 22, 858-457-3030

Stephen Schwartz and Friends The Old Globe, 1363 Old Globe Way, Balboa Park, 7:30 pm, March 9, 619-234-5623

"Rent" San Diego Civic Theatre, 1100 Third Ave., Downtown-Gaslamp, March 10 - March 15, 619-570-1000
Thursday | 26
ANOTHER DAY IN PARADISE
For 30 years, native San Diego Dan Ragus has been helping out Latin and jazz on his trombone in New York and touring with J. Lo and Marc Anthony; among others. The prodigious trombonist returns home to debut his new group. See LIVE MUSIC, page 84.

Saturday | 28
BRING A DESIGNATED DRIVER!
Admissions to this Belgian beer party at Pizza Port gets you eight tasting tickets and a commemorative glass. Your designated driver will keep you out of jail and remind you to grab that glass when you're finished comparing any of 60 flavors of beer. See SPECIAL, page 64.

CELEBRATING CÉSAR
Celebrate the man who inspired a state holiday in recognition of his life's work to benefit the rights of laborers. Sherman Heights honoree César Chávez with a parade and festival. See SPECIAL, page 64.

Friday | 27
AN EVENING OF TANTRA THEATER
We're born, we die, and in between is the stuff of life — the comedy, drama, dance, and "sacred sex" — all of which will be tackled on an outdoor stage (yeah, you heard us, "out") by Tantra Theater Group. See IN PERSON, page 61.

SHORT-ATTENTION-SPAN THEATER
A perfect right out for the Nintendo-raised generation. At North Park Vaudeville and Candy, each of eight plays is portrayed in only ten minutes, and the adjacent room is packed with colorful edible treats. See THEATER, page 104.

Sunday | 29
HONK!
In a valiant attempt to undo the damage of fashion magazines and plastic-surgery reality shows, the Encore Youth Theatre presents the musical version of The Ugly Duckling, a classic tale about loving yourself for who, and what, you are. See FOR KIDS, page 60.

Monday | 30
FROM THE ELITE TO THE STREET
How old fashion — previously established by an elite group of Paris designers — wind up coming from the newest guest curator for CityPap International Museum Joyce Corbett has an answer. See LECTURES, page 63.

Tuesday | 31
WORKING
This musical, written by Stephen Schwartz (Wicked, Godspell), entwines the lives of 26 average working Americans, including a waitress, fireman, housewife, teacher, and supermarket checker. Songs by Schwartz, James Taylor, and Lin-Manuel Miranda, See THEATER, page 103.

Wednesday | 1
BETTER THAN NORMAL?
People don't like to think of themselves as "average." But can drugs approved for people with cognitive deficits be taken by average people to make them "better"? Pundits will explore the ethics of so-called "smart drugs" at Reuben H. Fleet Science Center. See LECTURES, page 62.

NO FOOling — IT'S TAX TIME!
If your make less than $100,000 a year and have difficulty navigating numbers on Turbo Tax, the AARP is here to help. Volunteers for the Tax Assistance Program will help you crunch the numbers for both federal and state. See SPECIAL, page 64.
THEATER TIPS

what's going on

Divas In Concert will make its West Coast debut with the production of West Coast Bette on March 10. The show, featuring performances by Bette Midler, will be at the Orpheum Theatre. For ticket information, call 395-1900 or visit www.divasinc.com.

Compass Theatre will present Tracy Letts' Killer Joe on April 5. Produced by Dale Monte and directed by Lita Berger, the cast of five provides inventive performances in a trailer on the outskirts of Dallas. It's called a comedy but you might not think that after you spend an evening with Killer Joe and the Smith family. There's sexual abuse, violence, and even murder (note: fatal study). Mike Davis does especially good work as the conniving Anse, while Joe Baker brings his perfect life into the character of Chris. This tiny black box theatre in Hilburn still rocks your socks! Tickets are available thru the box office at 395-6890 or at www.compasstheatre.com.

Cygnet Theatre Company makes history with Alan Bennett's History Boys. The company officially opens its newly decorated space in Old Town with the Tony Award-winning comedy that follows the last year of eight history students in England as they try to tackle exam day at Cribbley and Combridge. Along the way to finding a place at a good university, they are side-tracked by the national pursuit of test scores. Artist Director Sean Murray has directed this show with a focus on technical and emotional accuracy. The Old Globe will open its 2009-2010 season with the world premiere of件's new play, "The Imperialists '#". The cast includes Delroy Lindo, Mark Gordon, and Kellie Shanygne Williams. Tickets are available thru the box office at 395-6890 or at www.oldglobe.org.

Bob Fosse's The Real Thing is coming up with four one-acts at The Washington Street Arts Space at 116 W. Washington Street. Alan Ball's Power Lunch is one of the plays and features Kristina Neek and Michael Weller. Call for reservations at 395-7060.

New Mileage Arts will present Anouilh's The葳asive beginning April 4. The play is a look at contemporary alienation, and tells the story of a high school student who runs away from San Diego searching for the meaning of life. The play follows Laura and her best friend Leslie as they journey across the country in search of themselves. Call Steve for ticket information at 760-433-3245 or visit www.newmileagearts.com.

Civic Theatre will allow San Diego to see two original Broadway stars in the musical Rent (Adrian Pasdar and Anthony Rapp), March 10-15. Babbo's Theatre will offer a number of shows as well. Grammy nominated Tenor Laine will make an appearance on March 7. Their music has been described as a mix of blues and contemporary jazz, with a touch of classical and pop. Tickets are available thru the box office at 395-6890 or at www.oldglobe.org.

The Old Globe Theatre will offer up a Broadway-bound musical, Working, beginning March 7. This piece was adapted from Stud's 1962 book of the same name. The musical is about working in America, with skits of twenty-six everyday Americans. Call for your tickets at 395-2323. Tickets are available thru the box office at 395-6890 or at www.oldglobe.org.

Lamb's Players Theatre presents The Hothouse, a romantic comedy by Mike Bickers, beginning March 15 at the Horton Grand Theatre. The play is set in the bedroom of a wealthy old woman who is about to die and is struggling to find love in the face of her impending death. Tickets are available thru the box office at 395-6890 or at www.lambsplayers.org.
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'WORKING' (Left to right) Danielle Lee Greaves, Adam Monley, Wayne Duvall and Donna Lynne Champlin star in The Old Globe's production of 'Working,' which runs through April 12. PHOTO BY CRAIG SCHWARTZ
Mar 7–Apr 12 At the Old Globe: “Working,” a musical tapestry of how we work in America based on the best-selling book by Pulitzer prize-winning author, the late Studs Terkel.
CHECK THIS OUT

**Good Eyes:** UCSD's production of *Danton's Death* closed on Feb 28, and frankly, chunks of it won't be missed. Playwright Georg Buchner's story about the guillotine's role in keeping order following the French Revolution suffers from dialogue that's a way too ornamental for its own good. But here's the cool thing: Domínguez Serrad directed it. The acclaimed Serrad's Theatre de la Jeune Lune, based in Minneapolis, closed shop last year $1 million in debt — and when something radical like that happens in the theater-rich Twin Cities, you pretty much get a clue that a recession's set in. Serrad's great company had performed under the auspices of La Jolla Playhouse before, so he's no stranger to campus. With *Danton's Death*, UCSD's Department of Theatre and Dance has capitalized on that solid relationship — and its foresight in bringing Serrad and back plants a serious feather in local theater's cap. Big ups.

—Martin Jones Westlin

OPENING

**The Threepenny Opera:** Peachum's been caught with his hand in the capitalist cookie jar, but his accusers go easy on him in the benevolent spirit of socialism. Produced by San Diego Repertory Theatre, opens March 6 at The Lyceum, 79 Horton Plaza, Downtown. 619-544-1000. www.sandiegorep.com.

**Working:** This musical adaptation of Studs Terkel's book examines the way Americans from all walks of life view work. Opens in previews March 7 at The Old Globe Theatre main-

NOW PLAYING

**Room Service:** Book a theater; start rehearsing; put the cyst up at a hotel; figure out how to pay for it later. Produced by Lamb's Players Theatre, it runs through March 29 at the Louis and Paul Harter Stage, 142 Orange Ave, in Coronado. $30-$45. 619-437-0000, www.lambplayers.org.


**Sexes Advice:** One of the Less Boys of Susan has made it to Chicago, harrowing story of survival in tow. Produced by The Old Globe Theatre, it runs through March 8 at the Arena Stage, Copley Auditorium, San Diego Museum of Art, 1450 El Prado in Balboa Park. $29-$45. 619-23-GLOBE, www.oldglobe.org.

**The History Boys:** Eight British boarding-school seniors dwell on their plans for college and the pasts that got them there. Through March 29 at Cygnet Theatre Company's Old Town Theatre, 4040 Twiggs St, in Old Town. $17-$27. 619-337-1523, www.cygnettheatre.com.

**The Sugar Syndrome:** A troubled 17-year-old girl's online encounter with a child abuser goes to show we're all hopeless on this bus. Produced by MOXIE Theatre, it runs through March 8 at Diversionary Theatre, 4156 Park Blvd. in University Heights. $10-$35. 858-548-7620, www.moxtedtheatre.com.
'WORKING' AT THE GLOBE — The Old Globe's production of "Working" is running at the Old Globe Theatre through April 12. Tickets are available by calling 619-23-GLOBE or online at www.TheOldGlobe.org. Look for a review of this show next week.
"Working"
[ワーキング]
平均的アメリカ人が日常生活を語るミュージカル

主婦、消防士、政治記者、企業の従業員、建設業者、ウェイトレス、トラック運転手、郵便配達人、教師などの平均的アメリカ人26人がそれぞれの日常生活をモノローグで語りながら、希望や抱負について議論する姿を描く。ブロードウェイのヒット作品“Wicked”の作詞・作曲を手がけたスティーヴン・シュウォルツが脚本も担当したミュージカル。

THE GLOBE THEATRES (Old Globe Theatre), 1363 Old Globe Way, Balboa Park / 619-239-2255 (T), 期間—3/7(土)～4/12(日), 上演—火、水曜：7pm、木・金曜：8pm、土曜：2pm & 8pm、日曜：2pm & 7pm。
http://www.oldglobe.org
Inside PREVIEW

'Working'
The Old Globe is presenting a newly reimagined version of the musical "Working," which focuses on people and their jobs.

See Page 13

Radio theater
L.A. Theatre Works, which specializes in radio-style "broadcast" performances, brings "War of the Worlds" to Escondido.

See Page 13

Pretenders
British rockers The Pretenders have their first album in six years and other changes in store for their new tour.

See Page 14
Working
The Old Globe Theatre presents
Stephen Schwartz and Nina Faso's
popular musical about the Ameri-
can worker, based on the writings
of the late Sodis Tarkol. Gordon
Greenberg directed.
OLD GLOBE THEATRE, 1363 OLD GLOBE
WAY, SABRE PARK, 619-234-0023.
THURSDAYS, 8 P.M.; FRIDAYS, 8 P.M.
SATURDAYS, 2 AND 8 P.M.; SUNDAYS, 2
AND 7 P.M.; TUESDAYS, 7 P.M.; WEDNES-
DAY, 7 P.M. THROUGH APRIL 26.
Daily Humiliations

"To survive the day is triumph enough for the walking wounded among the great many of us."

The times they have a-changing-ed. Working, Steelworker's remarkable collection of interviews, was published in 1974. In it, the author, a writer for the American worker. In particular, the book is about how much can give over to the demands and dehumanization. When Stephen Schwartz/Fuller's musical Working, based on the book, premiered in 1978, it was a tough go for Broadway. 30 years ago, people who could afford Broadway tickets didn't want to hear about people who couldn't, those who felt "capable" or machine-like. The show closed in less than a month.

Schwartz is currently revising the original at the Old Globe Theatre. He's added new material, but what was once the white-and-blue-collared blue collar blue comes off as a soft sell, occasionally whiny show, the latter because the times have changed. Conditions in many workplaces are just as miserable as they were 31 years ago. But as businesses go under — and CEOs walk on asbestos platforms — just having a job has a different meaning these days. Schwartz should have considered a sequel. I Wish I Was (or Thank Heaven I'm Still) Working.

"I think it's in touch with what Carl Sandburg called "the backbones of America." He gave those years listening to workers' ambiguity of attitude toward the jobs. His subjects felt free to open up about conditions in the workplace without fear of reprisals. The same musical style might move in touch with Broadway than real-world nine-to-fives. Unauthorized, confessional voices in the book become production numbers. The emphasis is on what they have to say that's as dramatic as entertainment. It's as if they're performing for their bosses."

To revisit Working in San Diego invites imitation, but reservations, comparisons. In 1981, the show encountered the musical from the salon with a broad production on its face. Director Sam Woodhouse and a local cast capture the quiet — the pride and the anger — in Terkel's book. They create humble, character-driven vignettes that will illustrate any show's first night, "Brother Tueday," smiling as he threatened to enter a similar sounding, nasty phrase, and has Julie V. Sillers' "right to it" on it.
Working’ will touch your heart; won’t blow you away

Review
By Jenna Long

If there were ever an ideal time to bring “Working” back to the stage, this is it. The Old Globe knows how to cover its bases: While its last mainstage production, “Six Degrees of Separation,” delved into an isolated analysis of high-society art lovers, this modern adaptation of Studs Terkel’s 1974 best-selling book — “Working: People Talk About What They Do All Day and How They Feel About What They Do” — takes care of just about everybody else.

It’s the musical for ordinary people, the vast majority of Americans, who blend together to make up the working part of modern society. Its material we can all relate to and provoke real emotion — but doesn’t quite reach Broadway standards, as Globe musicals are known and even expect to do.

The show’s progression of monologues successfully serves to recognize a workforce of people who deal with our coverage every day of their lives. Therein an intriguing parallel made with the performers, who take pride in their work because “you’re doing something somebody else can’t do, even if it simply entails picking something up and putting it down.” Contrarily, the millworker says “I use my body as a tool” because “when that’s all you know how to do, that’s what you do.”

Terkel does a fascinating job of displaying different ways of coping with the day-to-day routine — some find ways to embrace their work and find joy in it, and others merely tolerate the task for their families’ sake, or because of the generations before them who have done the same without questioning why.

The monotony of mindless routine is brilliantly epitomized in “Delivery,” a new song by Lin-Manuel Miranda, hilariously sung by Nehal Joshi, whose escaping the confines of the workplace to deliver a food order is seen as a thrilling adventure — and so relatable to the droves of us who have worked in food service.

That idea is revisited from a different angle with “Do’s An Art,” performed vibrantly by Donna Lynne Champlin, as a waitress who looks for any way, any different phrasing of the same nightly dialogue, to add even contrived excitement to the repetitive nature of her work.

One of the most effective elements in representing a bending of infinite identities is found in Aaron Rhyne’s projection design, which cover the entire background of several scenes. Images of countless human faces in tiny boxes, endless calendars, computers and airline seats; and a never-ending white-picket fence, work so well in showing how our jobs are our livelihoods, for better or worse, connected to everything we do and who we are.

However, in establishing identities, stereotypes are abundant, though performed with obvious talent, piggish, tall professions like the bored receptionist, antiquated teacher and token prostitute with cliché accents and mannerisms might detract from uniting the nation’s workforce as individuals with a common goal. Characterizations of a flight attendant and UPS delivery man are more witty and innovative interpretations.

“Working’s” strength comes from its content, which is so much more relevant to a wider range of demographics than most theater, especially in a time of economic turmoil. When people are fearful of losing or have lost their jobs, don’t feel appreciated and understood and seek a human connection through entertainment, they will welcome real-life stories like the ones Terkel collected through interviews that make the individual feel like he or she is not alone in such a volatile world.

What “Working” lacks is that extraordinary quality that makes some musicals unforgettable — often because they “wow” us with something we’ve never seen before and cannot truly relate to — with a challenging, captivating score that has the power to give an audience chills.

Because these are separate vignettes, the sense of gradual character development and audience investment isn’t there as it could be in a plot-driven story, and the songs are somewhat meaningful or catchy (as in Craig Carnelia’s “Just A Housewife” and James Taylor’s “Brother Trucker”), but there’s no belted-out, gut-wrenching number like “Everybody’s Coming Up roses” from “Gypsy,” a stratospheric scale of notes as in “Company’s,” “Being Alive” or an absolute uncontrollable energy found in half the songs of “Rent.”

Danielle Lee Gravelle seems to have the capability to put everything she has into her songs, and she does what she can, but the material leaves her to go any further. The few minor dance sequences are enjoyable, but the choreography is hardly as synchronized as Radio City’s Rockettes.

This is a musical for ordinary people about ordinary people, and thus, it adds up to its overall quality is better than the best — perhaps accounting for “Working’s” brief 50-performance run on the Broadway stage back in 1978. But while the production is not in the same league as previous Globe spectacles like “Dreaming in the Dark” and “The Times They Are A-Changin’,” it doesn’t have to be — its relevant, relatable appeal puts Terkel’s research and this adaptation by Stephen Schwartz and Nina Faso in a class by itself.

Just don’t expect that difference to be reflected in ticket prices.

“Working” is playing through April 12 at the Old Globe Theatre.

See Review on A4

Continued From Page 24

Review
By Jenna Long

Source Code: 20090322kk
Entertainment :: Theatre

Working
by Steve Heyl
EDGE Contributor
Wednesday Mar 18, 2009

If Stephen Schwartz's big production "Wicked" was the right musical for the high-flying mid decade years, then (San Diego) Old Globe's production of the new-old Schwartz show Working is the right musical for the downsized end of the decade. As cast member Donna Lynne Champlin noted in the post-show Q&A session, "Nothing says 'recession' like a six person musical".

Based on a non-fiction book by the late Studs Terkel, this show takes us through a workday, from the ironworker arriving before dawn to the after hours cleaning lady. 26 different occupations are represented and in many cases the text is taken directly from interviews Terkel conducted while researching the book. Schwartz solicited musical contributions from other composers of the day (notably Mary Rogers and James Taylor) to create what is probably the only documentary musical ever written. Alas, it did not do well in its 1978 Broadway debut, playing only 24 performances. (It was recorded and the original cast album has contributed to its cult-status.)

The show was re-imagined for this production, with some professions dropped (e.g. the pre-bar code scanner cashier that knows the prices of all the items in the store); new ones added (the hedge fund manager); and still others updated (the Verizon customer support rep replaces the AT&T operator).

True to the original, Schwartz solicited musical contributions from a contemporary composer, in this case Lin-Manuel Miranda of (2008 Tony winner) "In the Heights" fame. A surprising portion of the show remains relevant, although two songs, "Just a Housewife" and "Brother Truckers", lack the punch (in the former case) or topicality (in the latter) one imagines they would have had in the 1970s. In a sign of the times the new production also downsizes the cast from 17 to 6.

Beowulf Boritt's three level "Hollywood Squares" set is brilliant. Before the show even starts, you see musicians climbing stairs, technical staff coming in and out and actors putting on makeup and warming up. The band is visible in the upper left cube the entire show. The stage manager sits in the upper right cube, and you hear him giving the opening light cues.

The crew appears on stage to assist with several on-stage costume/character changes, notably Danielle Lee Greaves amazing transformation from suburban housewife to urban hooker and Wayne DuVall's equally stunning metamorphosis from sleazy publicist to distracted retiree. Thus you even see the "Working" that goes on to bring you the show.

The cast is excellent. In addition to the afore-mentioned Greaves and DuVall, Nehal Joshi shows a spectacular range, from Indian customer support rep to old-world stonemason (although the latter accent was a trifle forced). Likewise Donna Lynne Champlin is equally comfortable as a third grade teacher lamenting the days when kids respected adults as she is a waitress who describes herself as "a one woman show". Adam Monley gives us a hedge fund manager, UPS man, and fireman (a role he researched at a La Jolla fire station, lucky man) among other roles. Marie-Frances Arcilla nearly stops the show with the haunting song "Millwork".

At its core, "Working" challenges us to take a fresh look at the unsung people around us and see the value that they - the UPS driver, the teacher, the community activist, the waitress and the rest - add to ever more our interconnected world. The finale drives this home as pictures of the cast merge into a sea of faces of working women and men. At one point a character says, "People are bigger than their jobs". This production is bigger than the six people that perform it; it is as big as all of us who are "Working" for a living.

*Working* runs through April 12 at the Old Globe in San Diego's Balboa Park.
SAN DIEGO
Regional Reviews by Bill Eadie

*Working*
The Old Globe

In 1972, Chicago radio personality Studs Terkel published his masterpiece, which he titled, *Working: People Talk About What They Do All Day and How They Feel About What They Do*. Its 589 pages were filled with interviews, often raw, sometimes silly, sometimes noble, with people who talked about their work. The talk was many times plain but also oftentimes eloquent. Mr. Terkel found many people who hated their jobs but also some who found fulfillment and nobility even in simple tasks.

Six years later, a musical version of *Working* debuted on Broadway. Two acts long, with a cast of seventeen performing 40 of the stories, and featuring songs by six different composers and lyricists, it lasted for 12 preview and 24 regular performances. Yet, *Working* lived on in regional productions and underwent changes in structure and casting.

Now, *Working* is being welcomed back by audiences in a completely new incarnation. Two songs (Stephen Schwartz's "Neat To Be a Newsboy," and James Taylor's "Un Mejor Día Vendrá") have been dropped, and two more ("Delivery" and "A Very Good Day," both by Lin-Manuel Miranda) have been added. Stories have been rearranged, as have many of the original songs. The cast has been cut to six, three men and three women, and the 26-story show now runs a tight 97 minutes without intermission.

Most particularly, many of the stories have been updated, featuring interviews that have been collected from holders of contemporary iconic jobs, such as a hedge fund manager, a tech support employee, a flight attendant, a fast food worker and a caregiver. While Mr. Terkel interviewed many who had grown up during the Great Depression and survived World War II, the contemporary version of *Working* features those stories along side of those of their grandchildren and great-grandchildren. The contrast, in some cases, is a stark one.

San Diego's Old Globe Theatre is the current home (through April 12) of this revised production, and it has been given a first-class production. Director Gordon Greenberg's concept is to show the cast and crew as working people, so the dressing rooms are onstage on two levels, while the third level of the set contains the band and the stage manager (who is also shown calling the show). Dressers come onstage more than once to do quick costume changes with the cast, and all of the running crew get bows at the curtain call.

Under Mr. Greenberg's sensitive and detailed direction, each of the six-member cast
performs admirably. I'm sure that each audience member will have favorite moments; mine were Marie-France Arcilla's terrified (and terrifying) flight attendant, Adam Mosley's arrogant hedge fund manager, Danielle Lee Greaves' innocent and knowing prostitute, and Wayne Duvall's poignant portrayal of Joe, the retired man. Nehal Joshi displays a lovely tenor in Mr. Miranda's sad but wise "A Very Good Day" (Mr. Joshi also sings Mr. Miranda's less effective "Delivery"). And Donna Lynne Champlin did magnificent work all evening, but her performance of the show's big number, Mr. Schwartz's "It's An Art," had star-making written all over it.

I do have some quibbles with the show as it stands. Aaron Rhyne's projection design features some effective moments, but many times it is more distracting than helpful. The adaptation, by Mr. Schwartz and Nina Faso, has aimed for and achieved many forms of diversity, but I wonder why all of the very young people being portrayed are either arrogant, clueless, or both. Many youth may live in a fantasy world when it comes to work, but it seems to me that at least one of the three stories featuring them should be a positive portrayal.

Finally, while Working plays big in the six hundred some odd seat Old Globe, I certainly would not want to see it on tour a couple of years from now playing the 3000-seat San Diego Civic Theatre. How it would connect with audiences in a 1000-plus-seat Broadway house is still up to speculation. Still, Working works, and we should all be so lucky.

Performances through April 12. Box Office: (619) 23-GLOBE, or The Old Globe's website.

Working. Based on the book by Studs Turkel; Adapted by Steven Schwartz and Nina Faso; Music and lyrics by Stephen Schwartz, James Taylor, Lin-Manuel Miranda, Micki Grant, Mary Rodgers, Craig Carnelia, Susan Birkenhead, Matt Landers and Graciela Daniele; Director: Gordon Greenberg; Choreographer: Joshua Rhodes; Musical Director: Mark Hartman; Orchestration: Alex Lacamoire; Scenic Design: Beowulf Boritt; Lighting Design: Jeff Croiter; Costume Design: Mattie Ullrich; Sound Design: Tony Smolenski IV; Projection Designer: Aaron Rhyne; Stage Manager: Dan Rosokoff.

With Adam Monley, Nehal Joshi, Wayne Duvall, Marie-France Arcilla, Danielle Lee Greaves, and Donna Lynne Champlin.

See the current theatre season schedule for the San Diego area.

- Bill Eadie
Pat Launer: Spotlight on Theater

Posted By william.yelles On March 19, 2009 @ 8:08 am In Arts & Entertainment, Columns & Blogs | No Comments

"Working"

PAT LAUNER

The book was written by Stephen Schwartz and Nina Faso, with music by Schwartz ("Wicked," "Pippin") and an array of other song-crafters: Craig Carnelia, Micki Grant, Mary Rodgers and James Taylor. Lyrics were created by Schwartz, Carnelia, Grant, Taylor and Susan Birkenhead. In 2008, Schwartz invited composer-lyricist and recent Tony Award-winner Lin-Manuel Miranda ("In the Heights") to contribute two new songs to a revised version that opened last May at Asolo Repertory Theatre in Sarasota, Fla., and has been further revised for this new production at the Old Globe.

The plotless revue chronicles a day in the life of some two dozen average American workers, including a waitress, a trucker, a stay-at-home Mom, an ironworker, a stone mason, a UPS delivery man, a teacher, a millworker and a retiree. All the songs and monologues come almost directly from the interviews, more of which were collected in the past year or two, to reflect changes in employment, adding a project manager, hedge fund manager and others. There is no narrative arc to the piece, but the scenelets segue smoothly from one to the next, sometimes overlapping into duets.
The six-member cast is extremely versatile and under Gordon Greenberg’s inventive direction, even the behind-the-scenes workers get into the act, so we actually see the stage manager and dressers do their work during the show. Highlights include Donna Lynne Champlin’s engaging turn at the funny proud-waitress anthem, “It’s An Art” (Schwartz), Nehal Joshi’s irresistible food delivery guy (“Delivery,” by Miranda), and his poignant duet with Marie-France Arcilla, “A Very Good Day” (Miranda) about people who do “what no one wants to do,” being caregivers for the elderly or the very young. Wayne Duvall is heartbreaking in the “Fathers and Sons” number (Schwartz) and as “Joe,” the retiree (Carmella). Danielle Lee Greaves is touching as a housewife and one of the “Cleanin’ Women” (Grant), who wants better for her daughter. Adam Monley’s hedge fund manager won audience applause and jeers. There are tales of job-loving and loathing, anger, resentment, contentment and the wistful “If I Could’ve Been” (Grant).

Though the 90 intermissionless minutes go by fairly fast, there are several plausible endpoints, only to be followed by another story. The final, somewhat melancholy “Something to Point To” (Carmella), feels anti-climactic.

The production is excellent. The set (Broadway/Off Broadway veteran Beowulf Boritt) is a tri-level interior, with open-face high-rise apartment rooms. On the top level are the stage manager, ‘calling’ the show cues at the outset, and the outstanding four-piece band, that eloquently masters musical styles from folk to rock to tango to country (orchestration by Alex Lacamoire; musical director and keyboards, Mark Harman). In the center is a zigzagging, fire-escape-like staircase, used to fine effect. The lighting (Jeff Croiter) is enhanced by evocative projections (Aaron Rhyne, with additional material from Boritt). The character-defining costumes (Matti Ulrich) and wigs are rapidly and efficiently alternated. The choreography (Josh Rhodes) is basic but clever.

This is a time everyone is contemplating work, whether they’re missing it, at peril of losing it or thankful to have it. And in the wake of Terkel’s recent death last October (at age 96), it’s the right moment to remember the great man’s legacy. Everything about this production hits the right notes.

**THE LOCATION:** The Old Globe Theatre, 1363 Old Globe Way, San Diego; (619) 231-1941; The Old Globe Theatre [1]

**THE DETAILS:** Tickets: $53 - $79. Performances: Sun/Tue/Wed at 7 p.m.; Thu/Fri/Sat at 8 p.m.; matinees: Sat/Sun at 2 p.m. THE BOTTOM LINE: BEST BET
‘Working’ gets payday

By Scott Hopkins
SPECIAL TO THE STAR NEWS

A former Broadway show being updated and “re-imagined” will open at the Old Globe Theatre on March 7 for a run that concludes April 12.

“Working” is a musical based on a book by the same name. Written by Studs Terkel, the book is a compilation of interviews with Americans from many differing professions.

An intriguing aspect of the play is that the actual words of many workers were used as lyrics in the show’s songs.

The hopes and aspirations each of us shares with these workers is woven into the play’s fabric as well.

Composer Steven Schwartz wrote songs for several occupations and gathered further material from such well-known performers as James Taylor.

A wide array of professions including an ironworker, corporate executive, teacher, UPS delivery man, housewife, telephone solicitor, waitress, retiree and fire fighter are included.

And yes, the world’s oldest profession is one of the 26 total.

Schwartz has, himself, enjoyed great success during his career, with such shows as “Godspell,” “Pippin” and the current worldwide mega-hit “Wicked” among his credits.

The first production of “Working” opened on May 14, 1978. It was revised later and is available from amazon.com on a DVD from 1982 or a CD produced in 1978 by the original cast.

Old Globe patrons and others will have a unique opportunity to meet Schwartz on Mar. 9 when “One Night with Stephen Schwartz and Friends” is presented. The 7:30 p.m. event will showcase the author while songs from his film and stage work will be sung in person by three Broadway performers.

Tickets for this event go on sale Feb. 8 for $49-$79 and are limited to the theater’s capacity of 600 seats. A limited number of premium tickets at $139 include a meet-and-greet with the author.

“Working” received Tony awards in 1978 for Best Book of a Musical and the show’s several songwriters were honored for Best Original Score.

The production also was nominated for Best Scenic Design and Best Lighting Design and two performers were nominated for Best Featured Actor in a Musical.

For more information, visit www.theoldglobe.com or call 234-6823.
Globe's well-staged ‘Working’ isn't escapist but it’s timely

PATRICIA ROSETH BUCKLEY
SFC & TV Critic

Book's a conundrum. With the current economy, everybody is talking about their job — if they have it, if they're looking for it or if they're afraid they're going to lose it. So in that way, the Old Globe's renegade version of the musical "Working," based on Studs Terkel's 1974 best-selling work of confessional verse, seems very timely. Or is it?

On the other hand, in hearing people talking frankly about their jobs really the way to have an enjoyable evening? There's a reason that Shirley Temple's movies were so huge during the Depression. They were pure escapism.

And yet, this 90-minute production is a pure joy to watch. Six extremely talented performers play 25 characters — from a workaholic CEO and a third-generation steelworker to a lifelong cleaning lady and an opinionated waitress. Each character gives us the opportunity to stand in their shoes for a moment or perhaps the length of a song.

"Working" first became a musical in 1974, written by Stephen Schwartz ("Wicked," "Pippin") and Nina Foss, with a score by a number of composers, including Schwartz and James Taylor. The show had a brief 25-performance run on Broadway.

A year ago, Schwartz began updating the musical, adding new musical numbers by Lin-Manuel Miranda ("In the Heights") and changing some of the professions that are not as common or as relevant anymore. For instance, a corporate architect is now a Wall Street hedge fund manager and a female telephone operator is now a male telephone service rep in India.

The Old Globe invited Schwartz to be an artist-in-residence and further work on this new version of the musical. The show is aptly directed by Gordon Greenberg, who takes what could be a little dry and makes it crackle with energy. He also brings the workings of the show onstage to remind you that these actors and singers are also working at their jobs.

This is largely accomplished by Bonnulf Boritt's worker-bee-like set. There are nine large cubicles in stacked platforms on stage — think of the opening of "The Brady Bunch."

Each cubicle is its own stage. One cubicle houses the live band and another the stage manager calling the show's cues. Quick costume changes are done right on stage. One, where a stay-at-home mom changes into a prostitute, is quite dramatic and a real treat for the audience to observe.

Boritt's set sounds rigid, but it's quite flexible. A screen in front and in back of the set become projection screens. Hundreds of workers' photos are displayed on it; but it's as heartbreaking when the entire back becomes flames while a fireman talks about his profession.

Each of the six actors possesses a powerhouse singing voice and a channeling-like ability to completely change character almost instantaneously. Adam Molony in particular is impressive as he goes from a CEO to a construction worker and is equally believable as each.

The reworking of "Working" really does work. The result is a sharp, informative musical that makes you think, which you may or may not want in an evening of entertainment right now. It probably depends on your employment situation.
‘Working’ offers slices of life
Updated production at Old Globe through April 12

BY JOSÉ A. LÓPEZ

“Working,” playing at the Old Globe Theatre through April 12, has six actors playing 26 roles, but there are dozens of people who share the spotlight.

In a nice self-referential touch, the play about the work that people do shows you all of those people who usually stay behind the scenes: the stage manager directing the action that kicks off the play, the orchestra playing the music and the dressers helping the cast members with their transformations.

Even the set itself, ingeniously designed by Beowulf Boritt, is laid out in such a way that one can see the actors in their dressing rooms before the start of the show.

That’s thanks to a sheer curtain that, when it’s not serving as a screen for digital projections, reveals nine stacked cubicles, reminiscent of the set of the “Hollywood Squares” game show.

These touches add another layer to this production, an updating by Stephen Schwartz (perhaps best known for his popular “Wicked”) to the 1978 musical that he and Nina Faso adapted based on a book of interviews about people in the workplace by Pulitzer prize-winning author Studs Terkel.

The musical, a sort of revue that features vignettes of songs and people describing what they do on the job, includes songs from Schwartz, James Taylor, Craig Carnell, Micki Grant and others.

This production updates some of the professions, including two new numbers written by Lin-Manuel Miranda, the 2008 Tony-winning composer of “In the Heights.”

Upsets include a fast-food delivery worker, an Indian call center employee, a hedge fund investor and a song by a nanny and a hospice care worker that “do the work that others won’t do.” The updates work for the most part, although some of the material — especially Taylor’s “Brother Trucker” — feel dated.

The six cast members are all standouts, and show a large amount of range in the way that they transform themselves, sometimes right in front of the audience’s sight.

No doubt, one can’t help but to think about

Adam Monley, front, with Nehal Joshi in The Old Globe’s production of ‘Working,’ playing in the Old Globe Theatre through April 12.

PHOTO PROVIDED BY CRAIG SCHWARTZ

the current economic climate, about those who are struggling with or losing their jobs, during the 90-minute production.

However, there is something uplifting in the way the production explores people’s feelings about their jobs, even when they’re ambivalent.

Because for every character it presents that is just looking for a paycheck, “Working” also presents some characters who truly love what they do — such as the waitress who loves to serve or stone mason who keeps working until the sun goes down.

It’s in the portrayal of these characters, and the real people they represent, that resonates in “Working,” offering a glimpse of people who take pride in their work and who just want, as in the words of the closing number, to have “Something to Point To” upon retirement.

Tickets for “Working” range from $53 to $79 and are available at the box office or through www.TheOldGlobe.org.
THEATER REVIEW

‘Working’ update tries hard, yet shows labor pains

By James Hubert
THEATER CRITIC

A mind could put in overtime trying to reconcile the riddle of “Working,” the labor-intensive musical that just opened at the Old Globe. Why does a real musical set in the present day sometimes feel dated into a 1970s schlock soap opera? The last one, at least, is easy to answer. “Working,” adapted by Southern California native and former St. Louis Post-Dispatch editor Robert Brustein, focuses on the lives of a group of workers who toil in a San Francisco department store.

Through director Gordon Greenberg’s stripped-down revival, the show’s two new songs by “In the Heights” creator Lin-Manuel Miranda and the rest of the score are the original Broadway production’s version of “Over the Rainbow.” The show’s signature numbers have been cut down to a more contemporary feel, and the cast is filled with strong performers who bring new life to the material.

Despite its strengths, “Working” still feels like a show that’s trying too hard to be relevant. The characters are all too eager to share their thoughts and feelings, and the overall tone is too didactic. But the music is still enjoyable, and the cast is excellent.

DETAILS

“Working”
Where: Adrienne Arsht Center, 36000 Old Globe Theatre, 6200 Old Globe Road
When: 7 p.m. Thursdays, Fridays; 2 p.m. Saturdays, 5 p.m. Sundays
Ticket: 700-266-6752
Online: TheOldGlobe.org

A scene from “Working”

People Talk About What They Do All Day and How They Feel About What They Do — and about the quiet revolutions of ordinary people. Ordinary is not musical theater’s forte. (Nor, for that matter, quiet)

And while Greenberg does all he can to make and interweave the 26 characters’ stories — and has updated the work through the magic of new interviews — those ideas don’t lend themselves easily to a cohesive piece of theater. “Working” becomes essentially a musical revue, interspersed by monologues and conversations.

Without a central narrative to tie the flesh out these characters, the show’s vignettes live or die by humor, surprise, a heroically nuanced performance or an especially strong song. “Working” still makes those factors work more often than not. It might have a right. In one scene, John Guare’s Shark (played by Francois Arnaul), who never seems far from the show’s best moments, plays a flight attendant whose plucky smile belies the terror she describes upon hearing of a serious problem with her plane.

In a winning design, the show’s characters’ reactions to the plane’s in-flight crisis are replayed in real time, a smart design scheme that’s always in sync with the show.

But the best part of “Working” is its cast. The show is filled with strong performances, particularly from the ensemble cast, which is led by the show’s star, the late-placed but very present Sean Hayes. Hayes is a standout in a cast that’s already full of stars.

As for the music, it’s generally strong, with a few standout numbers, particularly in the show’s second act. The finale, “All the Way,” is a showstopper that leaves the audience feeling satisfied.

So while “Working” isn’t working, their labor of love is a reminder of what’s behind this show.
Globe's well-staged 'Working' isn't escapist, but it's timely

Here's a conundrum: With the current economy, everyone talking about their work — whether they have it, whether they're looking for it or whether they're afraid they're going to lose it. So in that way, the Old Globe's reimagined version of the musical "Working," based on Studs Terkel's 1974 best-selling work of nonfiction, seems very timely.

On the other hand, is hearing people talking frankly about their jobs really the way to have an enjoyable evening? There's a reason that Shirley Temple's movies were so huge during the Depression. They were pure escape.

And yet, this 90-minute production is a pure joy to watch. Six extremely talented performers play 28 characters — from a workaholic CEO and a third-generation steelworker to a W很长 cleaning lady and an opinionated waitress. Each character gives us the opportunity to stand in their shoes for a moment or perhaps the length of a song. "Working" first became a musical in 1978, written by Stephen Schwartz ("Wicked," "Platoon") and Nina E. Pascual, with a score by a number of composers, including Schwartz and James Taylor. The show had a brief 25-performance run on Broadway.

A year ago, Schwartz began updating the musical, adding new musical numbers by Lin-Manuel Miranda ("In the Heights") and changing some of the professions that are not as common or as relevant anymore.

For instance, a corporate arbitrator is now a Wall Street hedge fund manager, and a female telephone operator is now a male telephone service rep in India.

The Old Globe invited Schwartz to be an artist-in-residence and further work on this new version of the musical. The show is now directed by Gordon Greenberg, who takes what could be a little dry and makes it crackle with energy. He also brings the work of the show's onstage to remind you that the actors and stagehands are also working at their jobs.

"This is largely accomplished by Beowulf Boritt's work-on-the-set. There are nine large cubicles stacked platform on stage — think of the opening of "The Brady Bunch."

Each cubicle is its own stage. One cubicle has the live band and another the stage manager calling the show's cues. Quick costume changes are done right on stage. One, where a stay-at-home mom changes into a posture, is quite dramatic and a real treat for the audience to observe.

Boritt's set sounds rigid, but it's quite flexible. A series in front and in back of the set become projection screens. Hundreds of workers' photos are displayed on it, but it's also stunning when the entire back becomes flames while a fireman talks about his profession.

Each of the six actors possesses a powerhouse singing voice and a genuine ability to convincingly create character almost instantaneously. Adam Monagle, in particular, is impressive as he goes from a CEO to a construction worker and is equally believable as each. The retelling of "Working" really does work. The result is a sharp, informative musical that makes you think, which you may or may not want in an evening of entertainment right now. It probably depends on your employment situation.
Working


With: Marie-France Arcilla, Donna Lynne Champlin, Wayne Duvall, Danielle Lee Greaves, Nehal Joshi, Adam Monley.

By BOB VERINI

In these hard times, it seems oddly fitting for a tuner titled "Working" to have been downsized (from 17 thesp in its 1978 debut to the current six) and its score partly outsourced (to "In the Heights" creator Lin-Manuel Miranda). Happily, the Old Globe's stimulus package transforms a heavily self-conscious pageant into 100 uninterrupted minutes of buoyant pleasure. Economic indicators have been cloudy for intimate entertainments eyeing the Main Stem, but if sheer entertainment is any criterion, luck may be with these laboring folk should their jobs be transferred to Gotham.

Studs Terkel's bestselling 1974 oral investigation, granting expression to the hitherto-unheard toilers of office and factory, got lost amidst the tuner's original overproduction. Yet despite a quick shuttering, the show's roster of meaty roles and a jauntily eclectic score by a consortium of pop and Broadway tunesmiths ensured a long life in schools, communities and regionals thereafter.

For this new incarnation born at Florida's Asolo Rep, the spoken and sung interview excerpts have been streamlined and rearranged for telluric unity. Situations and images become passed batons: from a trucker with cell-phone trouble to the Verizon support staffer who thanks him for his business; from a prostitute complaining, "People aren't built to switch on and off" to a bone-weary mill worker doing just that.

Helmer Gordon Greenberg marshals the transitions with precision and wit, turning a goofy PR man
(Wayne Duvall) into a doddering retiree, or a housewife (Danielle Lee Greaves) into a hooker, before our eyes. Black-clad techies participate openly in the changes -- even the stage manager and band visibly work their magic on an upper tier of Beowulf Boritt's boxy set -- to remind us we're not just hearing about work, we're seeing it in action.

Show's relative brevity reduces the need for dramatic build; the collage is everything, and what emerges is just enough taste of Terkel to whet the appetite for more. People's need to be recognized for what they do, others' disdain for menial labor and routine's mind-numbing effect are commonplace. But the everyday worker's dignity takes on new poignancy, and even urgency, when dramatized in these pointed snippets.

To its credit, "Working" neither demeans its witnesses nor idealizes them: Job slackers and overachievers are equally represented. We're brought up short when, for instance, that nice UPS man (Adam Monley) reports he kicks dogs and baits neighborhood women to pass the time; or a kindly schoolteacher (Donna Lynne Champlin) remembers her class writing out spelling words: "Ten times for the dumb ones! And twice for the smart."

But even Monley's cluelessly rapacious hedge fund manager (one of the occupations updated to account for 30 years' worth of workplace changes) wins a measure of affection, so sympathetically and skillfully is every figure played by Greenberg's first-rate cast.

At the risk of violating the evening's democratic spirit by singling anyone out, it's only right to mention a few Employees of the Month: Nehal Joshi, dazzling in Miranda's new near-rap about food deliveries; Duvall's unbearably moving Joe the retiree; and Marie-France Arcilla's devastated mill hand.

Although most solos register, there's a thinness to the group numbers originally written for a large chorale (and their lyrics are distressingly muddy in the Globe's miking).

But only a heart of stone could resist the tug when Craig Carnelia's inspiring finale picks up on the very first witness's wistful reminiscence. "Some mornings I look across the skyline," says ironworker Mike Dillard (Monley). "See that building? I helped build it."

The closing song agrees: "Everyone should have something to point to ... /Look what I did /See what I've done." In a sense, "Working" never comes to an end but stands tall as a chain of Hands Across America whose ends finally meet in harmony and symmetry.


Sets, Beowulf Boritt; costumes, Mattie Ullrich; lighting, Jeff Croiter; sound, Tony Smolenski IV; music director-conductor, Mark Hartman; orchestrations, Alex Lacamoire; projection design, Aaron Ryhe; stage manager, Dan Rosokoff. Opened March 12, 2009. Reviewed March 14. Runs through April 12. Running time: 1 HOUR, 40 MIN.

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http://www.variety.com/story.asp?i=story&r=VE1117939880&c=33

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3/16/2009
On the job again

Old Globe puts quality man-hours into no-drama 'Working.'

CHARLES McNULTY THEATER CRITIC >> Hard hats and waitress aprons usually make bit appearances in musicals, if they appear at all. But in "Working," Stephen Schwartz and Nina Faso's adaptation of Studs Terkel's book, in which he interviewed everyday Americans about their relationships to their jobs, these time-card punchers get their turn in the spotlight to sing and soliloquize about what keeps them busy all the livelong day. This amably earnest show, which was canned after 24 performances when it ran on Broadway in 1977, has become a regional-theater staple and a favorite among college theater departments. The underlying idea is so democratically promising that it seems as though someone's always tinkering to see whether an improved version can be devised for another cock at the big time. But as the new production at the Old Globe Theatre in San Diego makes clear, this ginger-ale musical is never going to get audiences drunk with excitement. [See 'Working,' Page D4]
'Working' updated and a bit downsized

'Some Back into it' Marie-Vrance Arcilla, Jeff, Adam Monley, Neha Joshi and Danielle Lee Greene at Old Globe.

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San Diego Arts

"Working" at the Old Globe Theatre

Refreshed and back on the job!

By Welton Jones

Posted on Fri, Mar 13th, 2009
Last updated Fri, Mar 13th, 2009

What's not to love about "Working"?

Touching stories of ordinary working folk as captured by the late, great Studs Terkel turned into jewel-like miniatures by Stephen Schwartz and Nina Faso. Scenes of marvelous monologues, Deeply satisfying songs, including a few that are unforgettable. And a scope that leaves nobody out.

Yet, despite endless successful revivals (including a memorable San Diego Rep version in the 1970s), this is not a show that makes many Top 20 lists. The lovely original production closed after just 30 Broadway performances (one of which I was privileged to see) and there's never been much talk of major revivals.

Maybe that could change, since Schwartz isn't giving up on the project. He's been in residence while the Globe Theatre assembled its affectionate, respectful and immensely successful new version to light up our spring season.

I'll confess to a bit of nervousness in approaching this project, given my blissful memories of the original and the tendency of many creators to finker with work which they feel never totally worked.

But the changes here are harmless. Mostly understandable updating of material dating back three decades, when small boys throw newspaper routes and computers were the size of your garage.

Studs Terkel, who died last year at 96, was a genius interviewer who never missed that exact moment when people shyly shared their souls. His 1974 book "Working People Talk About What They Do All Day and How They Feel About What They Do" was his masterpiece and the Schwartz-Faso team recognized it as a bounteous source of fresh, organic vignettes.

About 40 of the stories, from migrant workers to professional hockey stars, prostitutes to company executives, were arranged into a loose narrative and 18 became songs, written by six different composers, including Schwartz. A cast of 18, including Pati LaPone, Bob Gunton, Rex Everhart, Lynne Thigpen and Joe Mantegna, split the roles and did backup duty.

Musically, the best news is that the work of Craig Carnelia hasn't been disturbed at all. His exquisite portraits of the dedicated housewife, the sweet old retired guy and the mason, whose always disappointed that quitting time makes him leave the stone, are the show's unforgettable moments.

Schwartz's formidable professional wares is still around and James Taylor's haunting lament by the assembly-line workers
"...my body is a tool..."
continues to both fascinate and appall.
Micki Grant’s anthem for cleaning women remains fresh and the
aging school teacher portrait by Mary Rodgers and Susan
Birkenhead has been toned up just enough to continue its true ring.

The new name on the songwriter list is Lin-Manuel Miranda,
responsible for a delightful take on a fast-food delivery boy and a
poignant take on minority caregivers.

What’s missing? Lovin’ Al, the jive car-parker. The kid newspaper
carrier. The supermarket checker, the migrant workers and the
sports pros. The scoundrels and the salesmen.

And what’s new? Well, a hedge-fund manager pondering ethics. A
tech support telephone worker in India. A fund-raiser and a publicist.
Those caregivers and some cube-time commandos. Plus, the gas meter
reader has mysteriously become a UPS delivery guy.

Either Terkel came up with some supplemental stuff before his death
or Schwartz and Faso have learned his style well, because the new
material generally snaps right in place seamlessly.

The Globe production gets along just fine with only six actors, in
Gordon Greenberg’s deft, unaggressive staging. Really, there’s no
need for more faces, given the skills of this cast and the enveloping
theme of universality.

Taken in the order listed, they are:

Adam Monley, the average-looking white guy who nails the
slimeball financier as readily as the MBA kid dreaming of his
colonial mansion and golfing wife. He also leads James Taylor’s
“Brother: Truckers.”

Nehal Joshi, the dialect specialist who does the delivery boy, the
frustrated Indian phonista, the gentle Indian mason and a really scary
fired clerk who’s making up a victims list.

Wayne Duval, the senior member, equally touching as a kick-ass
steelworker who reads books and dreams for his kid and that dear old
worn-out retired guy.

Marie-France Arcilla, who brings fresh young beauty and poise in a
variety of mixtures and shines as a flight attendant.

Danielle Lee Graves, remarkably flexible across age and class and
versatile enough to sell both the candid call girl and that precious
housewife.

Donna Lynne Champlin, who disappears totally into characters such
as the thorny old school teacher and that indomitable waitress, never
sinking into stereotype.

The basic four-piece band led by Mark Hartman and armed with
Alex Lacamoire’s realistic orchestrations, is as impeccable as
possible and Josh Rhodes’ reasonable choreography keeps a sparkle
to the movement.

Beowulf Boritt has provided a three-story set with lots of
opportunities for silhouettes and projections, a boon to lighting
designer Jeff Croiter and projector man Aaron Rhyne. Mattie Ullrich’s
clothes are right for all occasion and lend themselves gracefully to
quick change.

It wouldn’t be hard to stick in an intermission and the show probably
would benefit. And if the idea of having the stage manager’s opening cues audible is to show workers effectively at work, then it would be a good idea to make sure of the resulting sound balances.

But, hey, those are quibbles. What’s really refreshing is to report that a neglected classic of the American musical theatre is, today, considerably less neglected.

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Dates: 7 p.m. Sundays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays; 8 p.m. Thursdays-Saturdays; 2 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays through April 12, 2009.
Organization: Old Globe Theatre
Phone: 619 234-5623
Production: Play
Type: Region
Region: Balboa Park
URL: www.oldglobe.org
Venue: Old Globe Theatre, Balboa Park, San Diego

About the author: Welton Jones has been reviewing shows for 50 years as of October 2007. 35 of those years at the UNION-TRIBUNE and, now, six for SANDieGO.COM where he wrote the first reviews to appear on the site.

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Welcome to Stability
THEATER

'Working'
by Joan Lesniewski

Work, some love it, most need it, many wish they had a different type of it, and right now too many people are losing it involuntarily.

In 1975, American writer Studs Terkel published interviews with hundreds of "ordinary people" about their jobs and how they feel about them in his book Working. A 1978 musical based on that book had a brief Broadway run and garnered six Tony nominations.

The Old Globe Theatre presents a "re-imagined" version of the show, updating some of the occupations and including two new songs by wunderkind Lin-Manuel Miranda, composer of the musical for the Broadway hit "In the Heights."

Working plays through April 12.

Directed by Gordon Greenberg.

Six actors portray 26 workers on the nine-cube grid of a set. Greenwich also gives weight to the Globe's stage area, who can be seen doing their jobs as stage manager, dresser or production aide. In the update, roles like switchboard operator and newsboy have been replaced by more current occupations such as hedge-fund manager (Adam Monley) and a host of a Wicket tech-support worker (Natalie JoJos), terrific Indian accent and all. Fouriners are placed on the third level of the grid.

Working is a quiet little show, with people like Kate (Danielle Lee Greaves) kid- dng laundry and singing about the joys and sorrows of being "Jewish Housewives," and caregivers Ukrain (Josh) and Thessa (Marie-France Arcilla), doing what no one wants to do. Teacher Rose (Diana Lynne Champlin) bemoans the changes in her 38year teaching job. "It's an art to be a fine waitress."

Many of us will identify with Joe, the retired (p/u) (Wayne Duvall), who notes, "I think of something and I forget it imme-

Miranda's charming "Delivery" number gives Joes a chance to escape the four walls of the fast-food joint and spread his wings. And Miranda's touch-
ing "A Very Good Day" gives Josh and Marie-France Arcilla an opportunity to dine as immigrant caregivers.

If you're looking for the next Broadway blockbuster, Working is probably not it. But as a comment on the American worker, or at least some American workers, this will do just fine.

Working runs through April 12, 2009 at the Old Globe Theatre. Showtime Sunday, Tuesday and Wednesday at 7 p.m., Thursday through Saturday at 8 p.m., matinee Saturdays and Sundays at 2 p.m. For tickets, call 619-23-GLORIE or visit www.theglobe.org.