

HOW TO SUCCEED IN MUSIC

From a Tony-winning musical to the Oregon Bach Festival

Long before *Mad Men* there was *How To Succeed In Business Without Really Trying*, the 1961 musical that satirized American corporate culture via humor rather than pathos. Frank Loesser and Abe Burrows' Pulitzer- and Tony-winning spoof chronicles the classic rags-to-riches story of a window washer who rises to the executive suite, providing plentiful opportunity for skewering the toadying, manipulative, deceptive behavior demanded by the system of ambitious greasy pole-climbers.

But unlike many issue-oriented shows, *How to Succeed* avoids being trapped in its time and place by including such elements as a love story, sly humor and, of course, Loesser's irresistible songs, including "I Believe in You" and "The Company Way." Why, there's even a nod to gender equality ("A Secretary Is Not A Toy").

That timeless appeal explains the success of its many revivals (most notably on Broadway in the mid-'90s and in 2011) and its continuing appeal for Eugene audiences, who can catch The Shedd's production opening Friday and running through June 28; **Peg Major** directs the action, **Robert Ashens** the music, with choreography by **Caitlin Christopher**.

The brief interval between the end of the main classical music season and the beginning of the Oregon Bach Festival is a bit of a dead zone, classical music-wise, but in-the-know readers can enjoy free music on the UO campus. At 7 pm Friday, June 19, you can plop your blanket down on the UO Memorial Quad and hear wind band music by Frank Ticheli, Malcolm Arnold, John Philip Sousa and more.

On Sunday afternoon at 2 pm, June 21, at the UO Collier House, the university's annual summer **Flute Extremes** (FluX) workshop recital includes music from the 18th through 20th centuries, including works by Telemann, recent Pulitzer winner David Lang and other



LYNNEA BARRY AND DYLAN STASACK IN *HOW TO SUCCEED IN BUSINESS WITHOUT REALLY TRYING* AT THE SHEDD

contemporary composers, including a pair of UO alumni. The following Sunday afternoon at 2:30 pm, June 28, classical guitar fans can catch a concert by guitarists **Alexander Rockwell** and **Craig Einhorn**, singer **Joy Meyer** and accordionist **John Polese** at the UO's Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art.

The big music news at the UO is the return of Eugene's most venerable musical rite of summer June 25, when the **Oregon Bach Festival** returns with two-dozen concerts in 18 days. Stay tuned for our full coverage next week, but you might want to grab tickets now for the opening week concerts, which erupt with *The Creation* on June 25 at the Hult Center. After one of the most famous opening scenes in music — which could be the soundtrack to the Big Bang — Joseph Haydn's mighty oratorio uses his most colorful music to paint scenic portraits of the events and even animals described in the Christian creation myth.

On June 26, Portland rocker-turned-theater singer

Storm Large joins the OBF orchestra at the Hult to reprise her 2013 star turn in Kurt Weill and Berthold Brecht's searing 1933 satire, *The Seven Deadly Sins*, with help from the superb vocal quartet **Hudson Shad**.

Don't worry, a preacher's on the way to save us from all that sinnin' — courtesy of Aaron Copland's ballet score, *Appalachian Spring*, whose 1944 premiere featured Merce Cunningham. Happily, the mostly 20th-century show starts with an overture by one of today's hottest young composers, San Francisco's **Mason Bates**.

Still another contemporary piece is onstage at the UO's Beall Concert Hall at 9 pm Sunday, June 28: Estonian composer Arvo Pärt's magnificent *Passio* sets the story of Jesus' crucifixion in a more contemplative way than we're used to at the festival, which regularly features J.S. Bach's immortal *Passion* settings. **Craig Hella Johnson**, who leads Austin's superb Conspirare chorus, conducts one of the festival's most recommended concerts. ■

THEATER BY RACHAEL CARNES

WE'LL ALWAYS HAVE PARIS

VLT's *Raw Canvas* tackles issues of motherhood and the artistic life



NANCY HOPPS IN *RAW CANVAS*

PHOTO BY THOM SCHUMACHER

When performer Nancy Hopps first tackled the one-woman show *Raw Canvas* in 2001, her life was in a radically different place than it is today.

"I had just come through cancer, relationship changes," Hopps recalls. "I was a busy, active parent to a teenage daughter. Coming back to the play now, I realize even more that the character's weighing her own passions and artistic fulfillment against societal and familial expectations."

The newly formed Fools Haven theater group, the brainchild of Judith "Sparky" Roberts and Joe Cronin, sponsors the play's revival June 19-21 at Very Little Theatre.

Written for Hopps by Barratt Walton and directed by Roberts, *Raw Canvas* is based on Walton's own mother-in-law, a painter, who made the audacious decision to leave her family in order to take an extended artistic sabbatical to Paris in 1952.

Raw Canvas grapples with the question of whether its main character Rosalyn will return to the confines of

domesticity or, rather, stay in Paris, enveloped with a young lover and living the life of a starving artist.

"She's not willing to play it safe," Hopps says of the character she portrays. "And that's what she's struggling with."

Rosalyn's conflict is one that any mother who is also a creative person could relate to, Hopps says. But the conflict is bigger than motherhood versus creativity; it's about finding life's balance.

"Being an 'anything else' and a creative person is a juggling act," Hopps says, pointing to pragmatic issues like dealing with time constraints in everyday life.

"If you take time for yourself, then there can be this guilt," she adds.

Written in a lyrically imagistic style, *Raw Canvas* has been tweaked a bit since its premiere nearly 15 years ago.

"Like any original work, with a first production under our belts, it's been revised and edited," Hopps explains. She credits the playwright's openness to change, along with the director's penchant for a collaborative approach, with tightening up the play while also bringing new life to the work.

"I've known [director] Sparky for many years. I love her attention to detail, artistically," Hopps says. "She has a background in mime and movement, and physical acting and physical humor. And we both feel an affinity for *this play*." ■

Raw Canvas plays 7:30 pm Friday and Saturday, June 19-20, and 2 pm Sunday, June 21, at Very Little Theatre; Q&A session with the playwright, director and performer to follow each performance. \$10; tickets at thevlt.com or 344-7751.