

The push and pull of Road

Road Show,
Lyric Stage Company of
Boston, through February
11. 617-585-5678 or
lyricstage.com

JULES BECKER

Could a repeatedly revising musical theater composer resemble a defensive parent with a homely child? A striking case in point is great talent Stephen Sondheim, who actually suggests such a comparison



Tony Castellanos as Wilson Mizner and Neil A. Casey as Addison Mizner in Lyric Stage Company of Boston production of "Road Show" (Courtesy Maggie Hall)

Continued on page 3

21 South End Organizations Receive Grants

SUBMITTED BY THE MAYOR'S OFFICE
OF ARTS AND CULTURE

Mayor Martin J. Walsh and the Mayor's Office of Arts and Culture, in collaboration with the Boston Cultural Council and the Mass Cultural Council, announced Monday the selection of 181 Boston arts organizations and projects that will receive 2018 Boston Cultural

Council organizational grants, totaling \$472,955.

Organizations applied for the funding through a competitive process, and projects were selected based on their potential to enhance the quality of life, and the economy and design of the City of Boston, in addition to advancing the goals of the Boston Creates Cultural Plan.

"This is an exciting time for

the City of Boston because we are investing in organizations and projects that have the potential to enhance Boston's arts and culture community," said Mayor Walsh. "I'm looking forward to seeing how these organizations use art to unite, lift up and inspire Boston's communities."

The City of Boston contributed

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Black History Month Events

Thursday, February 1

Art & Activism: Works of the Boston Black Male Artist Collective
5:00 PM – 8:30 PM
Newsfeed Café, Boston Public Library, 700 Boylston Street, Boston

Tuesday, February 6

5:00 PM – 6:30 PM
Reception and Book Signing
Remaking Black Power: How

Black Women Transformed an Era
Reception and Book Signing
African American Studies Program Building
138 Mountfort Street, Brookline

Wednesday, February 14

Black Legacy Ball
The Harvard Black Students Association's inaugural Black Legacy Ball will be held on February 24,

2018. Come for a night of dancing, singing, photos, food, and community at one of Boston's most historic venues: The Hampshire House, across from Boston Common. Black tie is recommended, and tickets are free.

<https://www.facebook.com/harvardbsa/>

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Photo credit: Beatriz Aleman and Liz Steinhauser

Honoring MLK

St. Stephen's Church and 30+ partners take action

BY LIZ STEINHAUSER
ST. STEPHEN'S

On Monday, January 15, St. Stephen's Youth Programs leaders and volunteers led the 8th Annual MLK Day of Action; this year, projects took place at not one but two Boston Public Schools!

With the help of close to 210 volunteers, the Blackstone Innovation School and the Josiah Quincy

Upper School have cleaner halls and classrooms, bright murals showing school pride, and new academic materials ready for student learning. This was thanks to a partnership of partner groups—more than thirty community and faith-based organizations—who joined together for the day; key support came from City Year and the Massachusetts Service Alliance, as well as staff and administrators from the schools.

Volunteers reflected on the words of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., "Philanthropy is commend-

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Online

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ANNETTE HILL GREEN

South End Calendar

13th Annual Ellis Progressive Dinner
Monday, February 5, 2018

5:30 PM - 9:30 PM

The Beehive 541 Tremont Street

The Ellis South End Neighborhood Association will hold its 13th Annual Ellis Progressive Dinner on Monday, February 5th. It's a marvelous way to meet new neighbors and sample gourmet offerings from our neighborhood restaurants.

More at www.ellisneighborhood.org

Heart of Gold Scholarship Event 2018

Thursday, February 8, 2018, 6:00 - 8:00 pm

Estragon, 700 Harrison Ave, Boston

The B/FSNA is having its annual fundraiser for its South End Scholarship. This is our 11th year. Last year we raised over \$40,000 and awarded over \$32,000 to 15 recipients. For the last 10 years, our neighborhood association has awarded scholarships ranging from \$1,000 to \$2,500 to over 45 South End high school graduates to cover textbooks, computers, or

supplies for college or trade school.

Tickets are \$50 in advance, \$75 at the door.

This year we will be enjoying delicious Spanish tapas, wine, beer and cocktails, courtesy of Estragon Tapas Bar. Enjoy live music and bid on lots of exciting items at our live and silent auctions. All proceeds benefit the Scholarship Fund of BFSNA.

<http://www.blackstonefranklin.org/>

South End Forum Meeting

Tuesday, February 13, 2018

6:00 - 8:00 pm

South End Library, 685 Tremont Street, Boston

[facebook.com/SouthEndForum](https://www.facebook.com/SouthEndForum)

**Old Dover Neighborhood Association
Monthly Meeting**

Tuesday, February 20, 2018

6:30 - 8:30 pm

Project Place, 1145 Washington Street

Service Guide Ads Get Results

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617.464.7280

Theater

Continued from page 1

about the 2011 musical "Road Show" in his own second collected lyrics volume "Look, I Made a Hat."

Sondheim, by his own admission in notes about the show, devoted 14 years with repeat collaborator John Weidman ("Pacific Overtures" and "Assassins") to four distinct scripts focusing on the respective odysseys of real life brothers Wilson and Addison Mizner—the first three with the titles "Wise Guys," "Gold!" and "Bounce."

Novelist Henry James once wrote of the need to eventually stop revising one's own work—advice this disappointing musical calls to mind. Spiro Veloudos—usually an inspired Sondheim specialist (IRNE Award-winning revivals of "Sunday in the Park with George," "Into the Woods" and "A Little Night Music")—and co-director Ilyse Robbins have put together an area premiere that has its moments but ultimately proves as unfulfilled as the show itself.

Clearly Sondheim and Weidman have tried to make their musical as intriguing in its own way as the very different brothers. After all, more sensible Addison (born in 1872) turned out to be a 'society architect' who nevertheless possessed both a philosophy and a dream. If he squandered a good deal of his talent, as Wilson contends in the show, he still succeeded in revival Mediterranean and Spanish styles in the homes he built, designed the Hitchcock Estate and brought attention to Palm Beach in the 1920's as a desirable destination.

By contrast, younger and more reckless Wilson (born in 1876) earned the dubious title "America's most fascinating outlaw" as a professional gambler, boxing promoter and panhandler in spite of ongoing efforts to write screenplays and employ his charms and charisma as a storyteller during his travels. While Addison goes along with Wilson, he often expresses resentment about his brother's persuasiveness.

The push and pull of the brothers' relationship does lie at the heart of the trimmed down, now 90-minute and no-intermission show—which tellingly moves from an early upbeat "Brotherly Love" number to the penultimate sad reunion duo "Get Out/Go." Revival director extraordinaire John Doyle (smartly streamlined editions of "Sweeney Todd" and

"Gypsy"), Sondheim observes in his second volume, had a lot to do with sharpening the focus on Wilson and Addison and shortening the show.

While Sondheim fans will discern echoes of melodies in some of the master composer's gems—"Follies," "Into the Woods" and "Sweeney Todd" among them, the fourth incarnation does cleverly move the musical's memorable romantic number "The Best Thing That Ever Has Happened" from a straight duo between Wilson and ex-wife Nellie—no longer a character in the show—to a gay one between Addison and fictional lover and business associate Hollis Bessemer.

Some Sondheim buffs—(this critic included) are not likely to find Addison's eventual telling off of Hollis fully satisfying despite dramatic license and sibling solidarity. Wilson may conclude hopefully "Sooner or later we're bound to get it right," but sadly the same cannot be said of this atypically unsatisfying show.

Lyric Stage Company's uneven production often proves just as unsatisfying. Neil A. Casey is generally convincing as more emotionally conflicted and self-critical Addison, and his duo with Patrick Varner—a standout as engaging Hollis—is both stirring and richly rendered.

Unfortunately Tony Castellanos seems miscast as Wilson. He repeatedly comes across as overbearing rather than engaging. Sean McGuirk could be feistier as admonishing though dying Papa Mizner, but big-voiced Vanessa J. Schukis brings virtuosic vitality and rich tone to mentoring Mama's spride-rich solo "Isn't He Something?"

Robbins' choreography surprisingly lacks the kind of variety and exuberance that usually characterizes her dance efforts and did distinguish her high caliber work on Greater Boston Stage Company's recent revival of "She Loves Me." Vivid projection could do much to bring to life Addison's architectural designs during the quick sequence with clients.

Long-married, deeply in love spouses sometimes pass away not long after each other. Likewise, the deeply bonded Mizner brothers both died in 1933, Wilson shortly after Addison. Their intertwined life journeys deserve a fully compelling examination, one not ultimately achieved by "Road Show" notwithstanding Veloudos and Robbins' earnest efforts.

Black History Month

Continued from page 1

Wednesday, February 14

Black Cotton Club: JAM Session Slow Jam Edition
Dorchester Arts Collaborative
157 Washington Street, Boston

Saturday, February 17

8:00 PM
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Wednesday, February 28

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Museum of African American History
African Meeting House, 46 Joy Street,
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St. Stephen's

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able, but it must not cause the philanthropist to overlook the circumstances of economic injustice which make philanthropy necessary."

By working side-by-side, volunteers took action with their hands and hearts and minds to create a more equitable public education system, in these two schools and system-wide. After lunch at the Blackstone School, they were joined by Jessica Tang, President of the Boston Teacher's Union Local 66, who inspired the volunteers to understand that working

for educational equity is one of the most important ways to create racial equity. Then, an intergenerational team of teen and adult organizers from St. Stephen's led a workshop on the budget process for public education.

Organizers made the case that students in Boston and across the Commonwealth of Massachusetts need and deserve a fully-funded and equitable public education system. The current state funding formula for public education has not been updated since 1993 and it is time for to bring public school funding into the 21st century.

Fortunately, State Senator Sonia Chang-Diaz has proposed a bill to do just this. If you

would like to support this bill, please call your State Senator and Representative, tell them why you care about high-quality, fully-funded public education, and ask them to move Bill S.223 and Bill S.220 out of committee. SSYP's intergenerational team of organizers are also working on a campaign to increase PILOT from local colleges and universities; this increased revenue will help bridge the gap in funding for Boston's public schools.

To learn more about SSYP or to get involved at the Blackstone, or to join us in these action steps for equity in education, please contact liz@ssyboston.org.



Photo credit: Beatriz Aleman and Liz Steinhauser

Revisiting Frederick Douglass

REV. IRENE MONROE

Frederick Douglas is dead. This February during Black History Month Americans across the country will commemorate the bicentennial of his birthday. Last year this time, however, President Donald J. Trump didn't appear to know this fact.

In kicking off Black History Month 2017

Trump hosted a "listening session" at the White House leaving listeners scratching their heads wondering if he knew Douglass as a self-liberated former slave turned abolitionist-died in 1895. Expecting then-White House press secretary Sean Spicer to clarify what Trump meant regarding his comment on Douglass, Spicer, however, made it clear he, too, didn't quite know if Douglass is dead.

"I think he [Trump] wants to highlight

the contributions he has made. And I think through a lot of the actions and statements he's going to make, I think that the contributions of Frederick Douglass will become more and more."

The remarks from both Trump and Spicer could have been an episode of "Drunk History," a TV comedy series where an inebriated

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Grants

Continued from page 1

\$300,000 in funding and Mass Cultural Council contributed over \$170,000 to the Boston Cultural Council (BCC).

The selected organizations represent an array of disciplines, including visual arts, theater, film, music, dance, and the humanities.

“On behalf of Boston City Singers, we are honored to receive continued funding from the Boston Cultural Council to support our music and youth development training programs,” said Melissa J. Graham, Managing Director of Boston City Singers. “These funds will have a significant impact on our ability to serve under-resourced children from Boston's most challenging neighborhoods.”

The BCC received 208 applications for this year's grant program. Applicants were required to show how they plan to help grow access to the arts in underserved areas lacking cultural opportunities, elevate the work of Boston's creatives, inspire the creation of new works, and support the achievement and provision of excellent, high quality arts and culture in the City of Boston.

“Financial support from the BCC allows us to both help local writers and reach local readers,” said Carissa Halston, Co-founder of Aforementioned Productions. “We can host more live events, which is where we've met so many of our contributors, and continue to develop our catalog by taking risks on authors who take risks on the page and the stage.”

“We are grateful for the support this grant provides for our in-school, after-school, free ticket access, and award-winning teen summer employment programs which reach thousands of people each year,” said Sue Dahling Sullivan, Chief Strategic Officer of the Boch Center. “Combined with the leadership support they have shown for ArtWeek, an innovative spring festival that is now expanding statewide, we applaud both the City of Boston and the Boston Cultural Council as committed champions for our creative community.”

This year, grants were categorized based on budget size,

with general operating support for those with an annual budget under \$1 million and project-specific grants for organizations with annual budgets over \$1 million. The BCC is also participating in a pilot payment program with the Mass Cultural Council this year, through which grantees will receive their payment upfront instead of through reimbursements.

“The Boston Creates planning process led us to realize the disparity of arts opportunities across the various neighborhoods of Boston,” said Julie Burros, Chief of Arts and Culture. “By investing in arts organizations across the City, we're a partner in their success and we're helping to expand access to arts opportunities in every community.”

Here are the South End-based organizations that received Boston Cultural Council grants this year:

Sleeping Weazel
Boston Ballet
Community Music Center of Boston
Speakeasy Stage Company
Castle Square Tenants Organization
Boston Dance Alliance, Inc.
Bay State Performing Arts, Inc. dba Boston Gay Men's Chorus
Palaver Strings
Company One Theatre
Boston Children's Theatre, Inc.
Inquilinos Boricuas en Acción, Inc.
United South End Settlements
Tri-Ad Veterans League
The Record Company
Mass LEAP Inc.
United South End Artists, Inc.
Zeitgeist Stage Company
Fiber Arts Boston Resource & Innovation Center
Urbanity Dance
Tunefoolery Music, Inc.
City Stage Co. of Boston

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South End News Briefs

Flynn Neighborhood Office Hours

Boston City Councilor Ed Flynn will host Neighborhood Office Hours this Friday, February 2nd from 9am-11am at the South End Branch of the Boston Public Library.

GE no longer wants a helipad, but Suffolk Construction does

COURTESY WWW.UNIVERSALHUB.COM

Suffolk Construction is seeking city permission to build a helicopter landing pad on what's now a parking lot across from its headquarters on Allerton Street in Roxbury. The company had been scheduled for a hearing before the Board of Appeals this morning for its 82 Kemble St. proposal, but the board agreed to postpone the hearing until March 6, after a Suffolk executive said the company is still engaged in discussions with nearby residents and civic groups about the proposal.

BPD Officers Confiscate 4 Firearms in Less Than 6 Hours

SUBMITTED BY BOSTON POLICE DEPARTMENT

In the BPD's ongoing and unwavering efforts to protect and serve the citizens of Boston by targeting those who knowingly carry and possess unlawful firearms, the men and women of the Boston Police Department arrested three individuals on gun-related charges and confiscated four firearms in less than 6 hours, one in the South End.

At about 9:25 PM on Saturday January 27, 2018, officers from District D-4 (South End) were on patrol in the area of 35 Brannon-Harris Way in the Lennox area when officers observed an individual, believed to be the subject of a no trespass order, enter one of the buildings inside the complex. As a result, officers followed the individual inside the building. After speaking to the individual, officers allowed the individual to leave the location. While still inside the building, officers received information relative to a weapon possibly hidden inside one of common areas. A search of the area enabled officers to locate and confiscate a loaded Ruger SR45 firearm tucked into a void or hole found in the common hallway. This matter to be further investigated by District D-4 detectives.

Monroe

Continued from page 4

narrator fumbles recounting historical events, which illustrate why we need Black History Month and an intensive tutorial for the Trump administration.

With the election of Barack Obama as president queries arose concerning the future need for Black History Month. Millennials, in particular, whose ballots help elect the country's first African-American president revealed celebrating Black History Month seem outdated to them. To them, the continuation of Black History Month is a relic tethered to an old defunct paradigm of the 1960s civil rights era and a hindrance to the country moving forward.

But in 2017 Trump became president. And queries about whether the continuation of Black History Month is needed died down, because Trump has tweeted out an insult to just about every marginalized group in the country.

Since his first year in office Trump's display of xenophobic, misogynistic, LGBTQ-phobic and racist remarks, to name just a few from his laundry list of bigotries, appears to have no cutoff point. Trump's embrace of white supremacy showed itself in his statement about black immigrants from what he depicted as "shithole countries. And, Trump's removal of white supremacist groups—Ku Klux Klan, Identitarians, Identity Christianity, Neo-Nazis, and Neo-Confederates, to name a few—from a violent extremist group list put out by the Southern Poverty Law Center highlights the Jim Crow era Trump wants the country to time travel back to when he says "Make America Great Again."

His repugnant "blame on both sides" comment about the Charlottesville mayhem that took place last summer depicted the perpetrators as victims, too. By Trump condemning counter-protesters similarly as white supremacists and swastika-wielding thugs, many of his supporters are now more emboldened than ever before to not only contest the celebration of Black History Month but to insist now on the celebration of white history month. For example, Boston born White supremacist Richard Spencer, a Trump supporter, sees no need for Black History Month. At one of his notorious rallies Spencer stated that "I would never say something like, 'I

don't like black people' just that 'Africans have benefited from white supremacy.' Trump's administration, if it could have its way would indeed have a white history month celebration.

If Spicer was telling the truth last year that Trump's administration will be highlighting Douglass's invaluable contribution to America's history it should start with his historic speech, "What, to the slave, is the Fourth of July?" delivered on July 5, 1852, to the Rochester Ladies Antislavery Society in Rochester, N.Y.

In the speech Douglass stated to a country then in the throes of slavery, "Do you mean, citizens, to mock me, by asking me to speak to-day? What have I, or those I represent, to do with your national independence. . . I am not included within the pale of this glorious anniversary! Your high independence only reveals the immeasurable distance between us. . . This Fourth of July is yours, not mine."

Douglass's speech then as now highlights the fight for black independence and full citizenship. It informs our understanding of race relations today because it connects with contemporary themes of class and gender issues, economic disparity and the prison industrial complex, to list a few.

For many years Community Change, Inc. Library on Racism in Boston held an annual public event called "Reading Frederick Douglass." At this participatory reading, people took turns reading aloud parts of Douglass's 4th of July speech.

The website explains why that particular speech. "Reading Frederick Douglass causes us to think in new ways about our nation's history, affords opportunities to open up discourse about race relations and citizenship (especially immediately before or after the speech), and raises awareness of the role slavery and race continue to play in our history and national discourse."

In 2012, the Federation of State Humanities Councils awarded Reading Frederick Douglass the Schwartz Prize for the Best Overall Program. The program is now held in Vermont.

Douglass's indefatigable activism as an abolitionist help end slavery, and the 13th Amendment made it legal. But it's important to remember his remarks about the 13th Amendment as a country moving forward: "Verily, the work does not end with the abolition of slavery, but only begins."

I hope Trump revisits Frederick Douglass.

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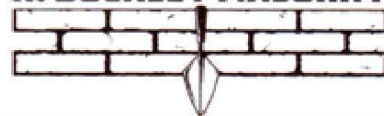
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