

The Broadway Bugle

For All Things Broadway

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Oliver Doyle of Liverpool, England, and Francesca McLaughlin (under umbrella), of Glasgow, Scotland, stand atop the glass steps of the TKTS Broadway discount tickets building in New York's Times Square. (AP Photo/Craig Ruttle)

New ticket tax could cripple sales

Raising the price of Broadway tickets could stop audiences from seeing their favorite shows

By: Patrick Healy

There was no flashy choreography as grim-faced Broadway industry leaders pleaded bluntly and plainly with New York legislative budget writers on Tuesday to reject Gov. David A. Paterson's proposed tax on theater tickets, which would raise prices about 8 bucks.

The appeals of the industry leaders, made at a legislative hearing on the tax proposals, drew less than a standing ovation: Assemblyman Herman

D. Farrell Jr., a powerful Manhattan Democrat who ran the hearing, noted that he had to "break my piggy bank" in order to buy a ticket recently for Lincoln Center Theater's hit revival of the musical "South Pacific." (Ticket prices can run as high as \$125.)

But another Assembly member, Richard L. Brodsky of Westchester, who is an avid theatergoer, noted that Broadway had not received the

sort of public assistance that sports teams have enjoyed. Nor, he said, did theaters receive the kind of public subsidies and private contributions that helped support many ballet companies and orchestras nationwide.

The four industry leaders — representing theater owners, producers, actors and union members — argued that the tax would hurt Broadway ticket sales and ultimately lead

to layoffs and closings. They warned that the tax would set off a chain reaction that would deplete tourist business for restaurants and hotels and work for scenery carpenters, costume-makers, dry cleaners and others just need to fill in space because the paragraph is too short and I don't have enough time to go back in and find the original article which I already saved but it didn't go a (Continued on A2)



Is this a good idea? Cast your vote now at our website, broadwaybugle.com

Playing the role of President Bush, Will Ferrell performs during the Natural Resources Defense Council fundraiser on Thursday, May 6, 2004 in Los Angeles, Calif.

(AP Photo/Chris Urso)

Will Ferrell for president?

By: Michelle Nichols

He has been nominated for Golden Globes and Emmy Awards and won MTV Movie Awards and People's Choice Awards. Could a Tony Award be next for actor Will Ferrell?

Ferrell opens on Broadway this week playing the role he made famous on during the 2000 U.S. presidential elections on "Saturday Night Live" — President George W. Bush — in "You're Welcome America. A Final Night with George W. Bush."

For 90 minutes Ferrell swag-

gers around the stage as Bush, taking the audience through a condensed version of his life and eight years as president, referring to his successor President Barack Obama as "the Tiger Woods guy." A dancing secret service agent who doesn't speak during the performance is played by Ferrell's crazy sidekick, Biff, who was created especially for this story so that I could fit in something halfway intelligent to say instead of going all the way back to the (Continued on A6)



"Senor Discretion Himself" cast members dance during rehearsal on Wednesday, April 7, 2004 in Washington. (AP Photo/Evan Vucci)

'Guys and Dolls' Debut Delayed

By: Art Vandelay

The Broadway revival of Guys and Dolls has delayed the start of previews by one day, to February 5, "to allow for an extra day of needed technical rehearsal," according to a news release. Audience members holding tickets for the February 4 performance will be contacted and accommodated at another performance. Opening night remains March 1 at the Nederlander Theatre, directed by Des McAnuff. Interesting, isn't it? Packed with such classic hits as "A Bushel and Peck," "Adelaide's Lament," "I'll Know," "Luck Be A Lady," "Sit Down, You're Rockin' the Boat," and

there are other great songs. Guys and Dolls features music and lyrics by Frank Loesser and book by Jo Swerling and Abe Burrows.

The Broadway revival is being produced by Howard Panter for Ambassador Theatre Group, Tulchin/Bartner/Jenkins, Bill Kenwright, Northwater Entertainment Studios and friends of people like Frank Loesser and Abe Burrows. The story is very long. (Continued on A2)

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Exclusive:

Which Broadway plays will soon be making the switch from stage to film? See our article on A8 for more about this exciting new move

No day like today for 'Rent'



The cast of "Rent" is pictured at New York's Nederlander Theater. (AP Photo/Keith Sherman)

Fans can now view the show from the comfort of home

By: Lisa Fung

February is shaping up to be the beginning of a season of love for fans of the Broadway musical "Rent."

Today marks the Blu-ray and DVD release of "Rent: Filmed Live on Broadway," which captures the last performance of Jonathan Larson's groundbreaking rock musical at

New York's Nederlander Theatre. The DVD also features a documentary about the "La Boheme"-inspired show centered on a group of friends struggling to survive in New York's East Village in the '80s, as well as behind-the-scenes moments and interviews leading up to the final curtain on

Sept. 7. The Tony Award- and Pulitzer Prize-winning musical ran for 12 years and 5,124 performances, making it the seventh-longest-running Broadway show.

The film can also be seen on PPV this month beginning Saturday. The schedule is here. (Continued on A4)

'West Side Story' back for another rumble



The cast of "West Side Story" returns. AP Photo/Bob Kline

By: David Johnson

Something's coming, Broadway! It's a sensational classic musical—and this time it's bilingual. The legendary "West Side Story" is gearing up to be told yet again, putting the Big Apple's beloved tuner right back on the boards where it belongs. Chock full of rivals, romance and one riotous

rumble, the gritty Romeo-and-Juliet-tale of star-crossed lovers caught between warring gangs in 1950s Manhattan is hitting the Rialto for its fourth revival. The classic hit isn't just a showcase for Leonard Bernstein and Stephen Sondheim's famed musical collaboration, however.

The new "West Side Sto-

ry" is loaded with some of the brightest young stars on Broadway, including matinee idol Matt Cavenaugh as sweetheart Tony and recent "In the Heights" diva Karen Olivo as sassy, streetwise Anita. Raising the stakes is the arrival of new international ingénue and virtual unknown Josefina Scaglione, an Argentinean with the voice of an angel, handpicked to play oh-so-pretty Puerto Rican petal Maria. A soaring score including "Somewhere," "Tonight," "America" and "I Feel Pretty" (and don't forget Bernstein's epic orchestral "Prologue") as sung by a new generation of giant talents? It's just what the doctor ordered! West Side Sto-

ry is one of my all time favorite Broadway musicals that I have been watching ever since I was a little girl growing up in New York. Personally, I enjoy the amazing dance numbers most of all and would love to learn how to dance like they do in the show or in the movie because they are so cool and I don't know if I'll ever get a chance to see West Side Story on Broadway but that would be really amazing to see on the stage. I think "America" would hope I (Continued on A4)

What do you think of the new season? Share your opinion! Write a letter for our Opinions section in A4



AP Photo/Chris Weeks

Has Mel Brooks gone too far? Take our poll now at www.broadwaybugle.com

Mel Brooks, recipient of the "Laurel Award," poses backstage at the 55th annual Writers Guild Awards, Saturday, March 8, 2003 in Beverly Hills, Calif.

'The Producers' laughs at Hitler, not with him, says director

By: Al Rudis

Hitler and the Holocaust. They sort of go together like a horse and carriage.

But not in "The Producers," the hit musical that Musical Theatre West is opened Friday at the Carpenter Performing Arts Center in Long Beach.

When Mel Brooks wrote and directed the original film comedy in 1968, some New York film critics objected to a major plot element that centered around the German leader, whose life was dedicated to exterminating Jews, homosexuals and others he considered unworthy.

Many of those who were offended, though, had to admit that the film had plenty of laughs, and that Brooks was Jewish and so were the two lead characters and the actors who played them. And the of-

fensiveness of the "Springtime for Hitler" production number was a key part of the plot. The film won an Academy Award for best screenplay and was popular enough that Brooks decided to rework it into a Broadway musical that opened in 2001 and won a record-breaking 12 Tony Awards.

"I've been a fan of the Zero Mostel-Gene Wilder film since I can remember," said Steve Gludini, who's directing the Long Beach production. "And when I heard they were making a musical of it, I decided what a perfect love letter to the theater." (A famous line in the movie refers to "a love letter to Hitler.")

"Mel Brooks has branded himself as the equal opportunity offender," said Gludini. I hope this (Continued on A8)