

Talk of the Town

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Young never did talk with Frankie Valli before the show started, but he did pay him a visit. He saw Mr. Valli perform live at the Flamingo in Las Vegas one night (unbeknownst to Mr. Valli). At the time, Young had just been offered the role and didn't want to jinx his first Broadway job. So he just watched him on stage and took notes on napkins, gathering more information for his character.

The play had originally made its debut at The La Jolla Playhouse in California the year before. As luck would have it for Young, several of the original cast members of that production were not available for the move to Broadway. Thus, his breakout role became available. And less than two months after landing it, Young found himself on Broadway.com's "Ones to Watch" list for the 2005-2006 Broadway season.

But the crazy ride of the past year was just beginning for Young. Since the show started, the cast and John have been profiled in Reader's Digest; performed at the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade on live television; appeared on television programs like Live at 5, CNN's Showbiz Tonight, The Today Show, and The David Letterman Show; was nominated for Broadway.com's Star of the Year; and chosen by The New York Times as one of the "Celestial Star Turns" of 2005. And, of course, was added to Sardi's lineup of stars. When asked, he's hard pressed to pick one as more exciting than the others.

"In the beginning, people didn't know what to make of the show because they thought it was going to be another jukebox show," said Young. "And the only people we really had in the beginning were die hard Four Seasons fans, who didn't care what the show would be like, and theatre people who were sort of skeptical because they've been burned so many times in the past by bad catalog shows. And now, the anticipation that you can see on the audience's face when the show starts... I remember a woman in the front row last week that raised her hands over her mouth everytime we would sing a Four Seasons song. She was just so delighted to see this story come alive.

"The buzz is so great about the show now that the audience



is more excited than they were when we opened. That's probably been the most exciting thing for me - to see how it's developing into a cultural phenomenon. It's not just a good show anymore.

"I've been in good shows before and it's great to get standing ovations and to have people ask

for your autograph and all that stuff. That's always fun, but seeing this show and what we're doing turn into a cultural phenomenon is something else!"

As great as this ride has been, eventually Young will move on to another role. He has six months left on his contract and will have to make a decision then, but he knows that there

will be a time to move on.

"I wouldn't like to do it forever!" laughs Young. "I would much rather be working really hard at something I love in a great part than sitting around in my boxers on the couch waiting for the phone to ring for that next big audition; however, I am an actor and my life blood is playing characters and my great-

est desire is to play new characters. So there will come a point when I really want to play a new character, but for the time being I'm really happy where I am."

He might even be happier in May when the Tony nominations come out. Something tells me this story has many more chapters to write.

-Gary Wien



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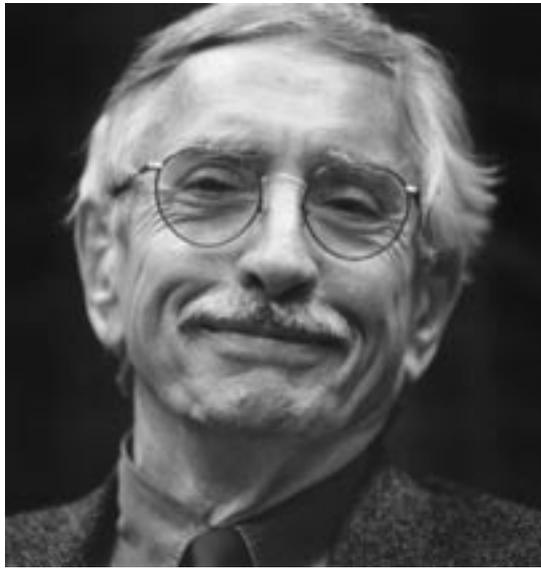
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Speak Up America!

Edward Albee To Teach At Princeton University



Acclaimed by critics as "America's most important dramatist still writing," Albee first gained national attention in 1959 with his production of "The Zoo Story." He has won the Pulitzer Prize in drama for "A Delicate Balance," "Seascape" (currently playing on Broadway) and "Three Tall Women." He also has earned a Tony Award for "Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?," "A Delicate Balance" (revival) and "The Goat or Who Is Sylvia?" He has been honored for his body of achievement with a gold medal from the Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters, a Kennedy Center Honor and a National Medal of Arts.

Albee is no stranger to Princeton's campus. He spent a short time on campus during the 1991-92 academic year as a Belknap Visitor through the University's Council of the Humanities. In 2002, he collaborated with McCarter Theatre Artistic Director Emily Mann on the production of his play, "All Over," and gave an address as part of the University's Public Lecture Series.

(PRINCETON, NJ) -- Award-winning playwright Edward Albee has been named the first recipient of the Princeton University/McCarter Theatre Playwriting Fellowship. The new theatrical initiative, funded by the Ford Foundation, will bring Albee to campus for several months beginning in fall 2007. While in residence, he will create a major new work that will be produced by McCarter. He also will teach in Princeton's Program in Theater and Dance.

"This fellowship program is a natural extension of the growing reciprocity between McCarter and Princeton and a model of how a professional theater and a university can work to mutual advantage," said Michael Cadden, director of the Program in Theater and Dance. "At a time when Princeton is committing to becoming a national leader in arts education, we're lucky to have Ford's encouragement to bring together the extraordinary resources of both organizations. Our students look forward to their dialogue with one of the most provocative minds in world theater."

"Edward Albee acutely understands the function of art in a free society," Mann said. "As America's premier living playwright, he is also an incisive critic of American culture, and has dedicated much of his life to teaching the craft and art of writing for the stage. I can think of no one better to launch our partnership with Princeton University than Mr. Albee. The opportunity for Princeton University students to study with and observe a living legend and for McCarter audiences to witness the birth of a new Edward Albee play is a gift beyond measure."

Princeton President Shirley M. Tilghman, who in January announced an initiative to substantially increase support for the creative and performing arts at the University, added, "I am deeply indebted to Emily Mann and Michael Cadden, and to the Ford Foundation, for this wonderful collaboration that brings a playwright of Edward Albee's distinction to Princeton. This fellowship provides our students with an extraordinary opportunity to work with and learn from one of the finest playwrights writing for the theater today."

AS AMERICA'S PREMIER LIVING PLAYWRIGHT, HE IS ALSO AN INCISIVE CRITIC OF AMERICAN CULTURE, AND HAS DEDICATED MUCH OF HIS LIFE TO TEACHING THE CRAFT AND ART OF WRITING FOR THE STAGE. I CAN THINK OF NO ONE BETTER TO LAUNCH OUR PARTNERSHIP WITH PRINCETON UNIVERSITY THAN MR. ALBEE.

Blonde Drinks In Hub City

Gun Metal Blues Inspires A Creative Promotion For The City

(New Brunswick, NJ) -- In the film noir musical Gunmetal Blues, onstage at the George Street Playhouse in New Brunswick, several mysterious blondes feature prominently in the plot. There's even a song about it in the score, in which there are "cool blondes, cruel blondes, play-you-for-a-fool blonde, dumb blonde, dum-de-dum blondes," and so forth. In the spirit of community partnership, George Street Playhouse reached out to the many restaurants in the area, inviting them to come up with a drink special that had their take on the blonde.

"We thought it would be a fun promotion and completely fitting with the film noir, airport lounge setting of the show," said Kelly Ryman, Director of Public Relations and Marketing at the Playhouse. "We are delighted that so many of them took us up on the challenge -- and that New Brunswick is highlighted as a destination not only for world class theatre, but first class dining."

Alcoholic and non-alcoholic options are available (the Playhouse will offer both, and Port City

Java offers a non-alcoholic milkshake). A complete listing of each of the specialty cocktails and where they are offered can be obtained at the Playhouse, located at 9 Livingston Avenue, or at the Playhouse's website www.GSPonline.org.

Some of the restaurants around town to participate include blonde blends created by bartenders at Catherine Lombardi, Clydz, La Fontana, The Frog and the Peach, Glow, Harvest Moon Brewery, Marita's Cantina, Verdigi, Port City Java, and, of course, George Street Playhouse as well.

As of press time, Panico's restaurant on Church Street and Delta's on Dennis Street indicated interest in participating, but as of this writing, have not concocted their special cocktail.

George Street Playhouse will also offer their takes on The Blonde at their concessions stand with The Guilty Blonde, and The Innocent Blonde, a non-alcoholic mix of lemonade, orange juice. Both of the GSP cocktails were devised by House Manager Nora Duffy.

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- Liz Smith

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