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News

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THE OLD GLOBE PRESENTS WEST COAST PREMIERE OF

ACCLAIMED MUSICAL PLAY: MONSIEUR CHOPIN

RENOWNED CREATOR/PERFORMER HERSHEY FELDER (GEORGE GERSHWIN ALONE) PORTRAYS FRÉDÉRIC CHOPIN IN FASCINATING PIECE ON ONE OF WORLD'S GREATEST COMPOSERS

PRODUCTION TO PLAY SPECIAL WEEK-LONG ENGAGEMENT: OCTOBER 26 - 31

San Diego – Executive Director Louis Spisto, Artistic Director Jack O'Brien and Resident Artistic Director Jerry Patch of the Tony Award®-winning Old Globe are pleased to announce the addition of the West Coast Premiere of Hershey Felder's acclaimed musical play, *Monsieur Chopin*, directed by Joel Zwick, to play in the Old Globe Theatre **October 26 – 31** (performances on Thursday, October 26 at 8pm; Friday, October 27 at 8pm; Saturday, October 28 at 2pm and 8pm; Sunday, October 29 at 2pm and 7pm; Monday, October 30 at 7pm; and Tuesday, October 31 at 7pm). Due to the popularity of Felder's current Globe hit, *George Gershwin Alone* (playing at the Globe through October 22), the Theatre will be adding this special week-long engagement of *Monsieur Chopin*, the second installment in Felder's "Composer's Sonata" – a trilogy of productions featuring Beethoven, Chopin and Gershwin.

"*George Gershwin Alone* has been incredibly popular with our audiences. After nearly every performance patrons have been asking if we would be presenting Hershey Felder's *Monsieur Chopin*, and we feel now is the right time to bring this thrilling companion piece to the Globe," said Spisto.

Monsieur Chopin is a celebrated work about the life and music of legendary composer, Frédéric Chopin. Audiences are invited to a private piano lesson that actually took place on March 4, 1848 in the opulent Parisian salon of the Polish maestro. As the lesson unfolds, Chopin reveals secrets about the art of the piano and composition, as well as secrets about himself in this intimate musical biography featuring Chopin's greatest works, including the *Prelude in C Minor*, *Mazurka in A Flat Major*, *Polonaise in A Major*, and his elegant *Nocturnes*. The Globe's presentation of *Monsieur Chopin* will also include the premiere of a newly-discovered cadenza in Chopin's own handwriting for his *Nocturne in E^b, opus 9/2*. The cadenza was uncovered in the collection of one of his student's families, written in pencil on a first edition print of the *Nocturne* from 1834, when Chopin first started teaching in Paris.

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“Emotionally charged and glorious!” raved the Chicago Sun-Times, while the Hartford Courant wrote, “*Monsieur Chopin* is a passionate and personal theater piece created by one of the few artists who could conceivably perform it. Bravo, indeed.”

The production team for *Monsieur Chopin* includes Yael Pardess, scenic design; Richard Norwood, lighting design; Benjamin Furiga, sound design, Boguslaw, wardrobe design, John Boesche, projection design, Morgan Cromwell, production stage manager, Matt Marsden, production manager/technical direction, Jeffrey Kallberg, Ph.D., production consultant.

Tickets for *Monsieur Chopin* are currently on sale and are available at **(619) 23-GLOBE**, on the Globe website at **www.TheOldGlobe.org**, or by visiting the Globe Box Office at 1363 Old Globe Way in Balboa Park. Ticket prices range from \$19 to \$59. A limited number of tickets will be held exclusively for Globe subscribers; please call the Globe Box Office for details.

Frédéric Chopin (1810-1849) was born in Zelazowa-Wola just outside of Warsaw, Poland to a French father and Polish mother. At the age of two, the family took up residence in Warsaw and by the age of seven, the young master had his first composition published. He played regularly for royalty and was feted as one of Poland’s true geniuses. He began his musical travels through Europe in 1829, and by 1831 he arrived in Paris, where he became the most sought after piano teacher and salon pianist of his day. In 1836, at Paris’ Hotel de France, he met the country’s most famous novelist, the authoress George Sand. Six years older than Chopin, Sand was the sensitive, elegant and reserved artist’s opposite in every possible way. However, it was only a matter of time before a romance blossomed and Sand became the most loving and giving partner that Chopin would ever have. Chopin died of a long-term illness on October 17, 1849 in Paris at the age of 39, leaving an incalculable contribution to the world of music.

Hershey Felder has performed *George Gershwin Alone* on Broadway, London’s West End, Ford’s Theatre, American Repertory Theatre, Hartford Stage, as well as at theaters in Los Angeles, Philadelphia, Florida, and a year-long run at Chicago’s Royal George Theatre. His regional and international appearances include *Monsieur Chopin* at the Royal George, American Repertory Theatre and Hartford Stage. Felder’s compositions include *Fairytale*, a musical; *Les Anges de Paris*, Suite for Violin and Piano; *Song Settings*, poetry by Vachel Lindsay; *Aliyah*, Concerto for Piano and Orchestra; *Hollywood Sweet*, for piano and orchestra; *Etudes Thematiques* for piano. Recordings include *Love Songs of the Yiddish Theatre*, *Back from Broadway*, as well as *George Gershwin Alone* and *Monsieur Chopin* for the WFMT Radio Network Recordings label. Current projects include the completion of the “Composer Trilogy” with *Beethoven*, as well as a Negaunee Foundation Chicago commission to complete *Noah’s Ark*, an opera. Mr. Felder is on the Board of Directors of the Chicago College of Performing Arts, and the Board of Directors of America’s historic Ford’s Theatre in Washington, DC. He has also been a Scholar in Residence at Harvard University’s Department of Music. Mr. Felder is married to Kim Campbell, former Prime Minister of Canada.

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Joel Zwick directed *My Big Fat Greek Wedding*, the highest-grossing romantic comedy of all time. Recent films include *Fat Albert* (with Bill Cosby), and *Elvis Has Left the Building*, starring John Corbett and Kim Basinger. Currently, Mr. Zwick is recognized as Hollywood's most prolific director of episodic television, with 525 episodes to his credit, including 21 pilots which have gone on to become regular series. Television shows include: *Laverne & Shirley*, *Mork & Mindy*, *Bosom Buddies*, *Perfect Strangers*, *Full House*, *It's a Living*, *Bros. Wayans*, *Joanie Loves Chachi*, *Parent' Hood*, *Two of A Kind*, *Love Boat*, *Hangin' with Mr. Cooper*, and many others. Mr. Zwick began his theatrical career at La Mama E.T.C., as director of the La Mama Plexus. He has directed on Broadway, off-Broadway, and Broadway touring companies. Previous New York productions have included *George Gershwin Alone* (Broadway, London, Chicago), *Dance with Me* (Tony nomination), *Shenandoah* (national tour), *Oklahoma* (national tour) and *Cold Storage* (American Place Theater). He also directed *Esther* (Promenade Theater, NY), *Merry-Go-Round* (Chicago and Las Vegas), *Last Chance Saloon* and *Woycek* (West End, London). Mr. Zwick has taught drama at Yale University, Brooklyn College, Queens College, Wheaton College, and the University of Southern California. He is a graduate (B.A., M.A.) of Brooklyn College.

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The internationally-acclaimed, Tony® Award-winning Old Globe is one of the most renowned regional theatres in the country and has stood as San Diego's flagship arts institution for 70 years. The Old Globe produces a year-round season of 15 plays and musicals on its three stages, including its highly-regarded Shakespeare festival. The Globe has become a gathering place for leading theatre artists from around the world, such as Tom Stoppard, Daniel Sullivan and Chita Rivera, among many others. Numerous Broadway-bound premieres and revivals, such as Dirty Rotten Scoundrels, The Full Monty and Damn Yankees, have been developed at The Old Globe and have gone on to enjoy highly successful runs in New York and at regional theatres across the country.

Highlights of the Globe's 2006/7 Season include the acclaimed production of Hershey Felder as George Gershwin Alone, the world premiere of Kenneth Lonergan's The Starry Messenger, starring Matthew Broderick, as well as Amy Freed's Restoration Comedy, the co-world premiere of Pig Farm, August Wilson's Two Trains Running and Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf. Under the leadership of Executive Director Louis G. Spisto, Artistic Director Jack O'Brien and Resident Artistic Director Jerry Patch, the Globe is at the forefront of the nation's leading performing arts organizations, setting a standard for excellence in American theatre.