



SOCIETY FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

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MAY 2009 EDU NEWS

Performances

In the month of May, SPA had the Aspen Santa Fe Ballet Company come to Jones Hall on the night of Friday, May 8th. We also had the children's musical group, Hot Peas 'N Butter, perform the next day at the Wortham Center – on Saturday May 9th. SPA was very excited that the ballet company was able to perform to a sold out audience. Furthermore, Aspen Santa Fe Ballet Company's signature performance, *Noir Blanc*, directed by Moses Pendleton, created a wonderful twist to the entire performance and resulted in a resounding ovation! The children's musical group Hot Peas 'N Butter proved to be a hit for the children and their parents alike. The audience was singing and dancing along in the isles of the Cullen Theater!

Esperanza Spalding performed on Friday night, May 29th, at Miller Outdoor Theater. Spalding is a 24-year-old prodigy-turned-pro on the double bass. Blessed with uncanny instrumental chops, a multi-lingual voice that is part angel and part siren, and a natural beauty that borders on hypnotic, it is thought that she might well be the hope for the future of jazz and instrumental music. Increasingly recognized and appreciated, Spalding played at The White House for President Obama and his wife, Michelle, on the evening of Tuesday May 12, 2009. At Houston's Miller Outdoor Theater, the place was **packed** as family, friends and neighbors came out to SPA's *final* public performance of the 08/09 season! It was a wonderful turnout and Spalding really wowed the audience.

Arts Talks!

On the night of the Aspen Santa Fe Ballet Company's performance, its Executive Director, Jean-Philippe Malaty, led an Arts Talk! session moderated by Sandra Organ Solis, founding artistic director of the Sandra Organ Dance Company (SODC) based in Houston. The question-and-answer session, led by Solis, turned out to be a great format for garnering information. The lecture was a total success, as Solis' interview of Malaty was both extremely informative and entertaining.



Performance preludes

We had the pleasure of having City Dance Ensemble host the performance prelude session of the Aspen Santa Fe Ballet Company's evening. City Dance Ensemble, based in Houston, was established in 1994 by Sherese Campbell as City Dance Studio. It is a place wherein a large diversity of dance students are trained; these students are allowed various performing opportunities from time to time. We were excited to host them again. They were exceptional!

Freak in the Frame was our performance prelude group at 7 p.m. for the Esperanza Spalding performance at Miller Outdoor Theater on Friday, May 29th. It was their first time delivering a performance prelude for SPA. A 5-member acoustic band infused with soul, hip hop and jazz stylings, they were incredibly excited for the opportunity to introduce Spalding to the Houston community through their pre-show performance. They are self-proclaimed 'great fans of hers' and they did a great job advertising her show!



Master Classes and Children's Museum

The Aspen Santa Fe Ballet Company hosted and taught a dance master class at the Jewish Community Center (JCC). SPA's partnership with the JCC and I.W. Marks has made our series of dance master classes possible. On Thursday, May 7th, a number of ballet and dance students were thrilled with the techniques taught them by Jean-Philippe Malaty, Executive Director of Aspen Santa Fe Ballet Company. The class was an all-female group of dancers who had a background in ballet. Malaty was truly impressed with their individual talents and praised all the master class participants.



In other news, Dolce Strings, led by the wonderful Danette Schuh, hosted a performance at the

Children's Museum of Houston on May 7th.



Their performance was used to highlight the upcoming Hot Peas N' Butter performance at the Wortham Center on May 9th, 2009. Many of the young children (and parents!) were *entranced* by the interesting performance Dolce Strings gave.



Upcoming events and noteworthy highlights

Summer Program

The SPA Education Dept. is hoisting up its summer program for the first time *ever*, this season!

Dates: from June 4 – July 1

Location: Black Middle School

Who: their 6th-8th grade students

Teacher/facilitator: Randall Flinn & various teachers from Houston-based Dance Ad Deum dance company

Structure of program: a group of 6th, 7th and 8th grade students at HISD's Black Middle School will spend three hours a day, from Monday-Friday, studying dance from Dance Ad Deum instructors. This stability in the form of a *structured* dance study environment will enhance students' learning experience. Students will learn three dance styles: jazz, hip hop, and modern, and the entire summer program will culminate in a final performance at the school auditorium.

Teacher Workshops

We have one more workshop left in the season and we are planning to do it in conjunction with our Theater District partner, Broadway Across America (BAA). The workshop will be held on Friday, September 18, 2009 at the Glassell Junior School (MFAH) in preparation for our visual art contest in the 09/10 season and in conjunction with BAA's production of *Cirque Dreams: Illumination*.

Wells Fargo 12th Annual Student Visual Art Contest

Start your mental preparation for our Annual Student Visual Art Contest. The contest will be held in conjunction with Broadway Across America's presentation of *Cirque Dreams: Illumination*.

Deadline to submit entries: FRIDAY, February 12, 2010 by 7p.m.

Awards ceremony: scheduled for March 6, 2010

Contest theme: check SPA website during the summer for our announcement of the theme

What: works on paper, including photography, are permitted, with a maximum size of 16" x 20" unmatted. All submitted artwork will be judged on creativity, skill, and interpretation of the theme.

About SPA

For more information on our events for the remainder of this season and for all of next season,

or to purchase tickets, please visit our website at www.spahouston.org.

Society for the Performing Arts

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