

OPERA

Eugene Onegin

Charleston Gaillard Center | 95 Calhoun Street

Approximately 2 hours, 30 minutes

Thursday, June 1, 7:30 pm

Thursday, June 8, 7:30 pm

Music by Pyotr Tchaikovsky

Conducted by Evan Rogister

Directed by Chen Shi-Zheng

Tchaikovsky's full range of emotions is on display in *Eugene Onegin*—his grand opera based on Pushkin's classic novel in verse. Russia's wintry beauty—expressed in both simple country life and the glittering aristocracy of St. Petersburg—is the backdrop for this story about the tragedy of first love. Directed by Festival-favorite Chen Shi-Zheng (*Matsukaze*, 2013; *Monkey: Journey to the West*, 2008; *The Peony Pavilion*, 2004, among others), this work indulges Tchaikovsky's soaring lyricism in Tatyana's "letter aria" as well as the familiar elegance of his dance music in the ballroom waltz. Celebrated soprano Natalia Pavlova portrays Tatyana, whose transition from a naive girl to a complex woman has given this work a reputation for the most sophisticated character development in opera. Cast as Onegin, baritone Franco Pomponi employs his dramatic intensity and virility to portray the cold nobleman.

Sung in Russian with English supertitles.

Farnace (US Premiere)

Dock Street Theatre | 135 Church St.

Approximately 2 hours, 30 minutes

Friday, June 9, 8:00 pm

Music by Antonio Vivaldi

Conducted by David Bates

Directed by Garry Hynes

Vivaldi—now best known for *The Four Seasons*—was most celebrated for his operas in his own time. In the 18th century, no other opera in Vivaldi's robust catalogue received more performances than *Farnace*. Following defeat at the hands of the Romans, Farnace, King of Pontus, tries to avoid capture; the plot develops in a string of events involving disobedience, love across enemy lines, and a scheming mother-in-law. In an incisively theatrical production by Irish director Garry Hynes—whose entry into opera started with her "rapturous" (*Opera*) production of *Kát'a Kabanová* at the 2014 Festival—this work examines questions of great contemporary relevance: Will we allow duty or love to rule? What consequences will our sacrifices invite? Will our children benefit or suffer from our choices? Countertenor Anthony Roth Costanzo stars in the title role; his performances during the Festival's 2016 chamber music series were met with great adoration: "He's the complete package for an opera singer: dramatic conviction, a rich tone, agile coloratura backed by unobtrusive breath control, expressivity whether singing in full-voice or a near whisper" (*The Charlotte Observer*).

The Festival's 2017 presentation of *Waiting for Godot* is also directed by Garry Hynes.

Sung in Italian with English supertitles.

DANCE

Monchichi

College of Charleston Sottile Theatre | 44 George Street
Approximately 1 hour

Friday, May 26, 8:00 pm

Company Wang Ramirez

Ballet- and martial arts-trained Honji Wang and gifted former B-boy Sébastien Ramirez transcend boundaries with *Monchichi*—a duet that draws on their own backstories to develop a new language. Ramirez—French with Spanish origins—crosses cultural and choreographic paths with Wang—born in Frankfurt to Korean parents—to create a portrait of a new, urban, mobile, and intercultural generation. In their open-minded world, classifications fall away as they connect. “The language that bridges their differences, though, isn’t some blend of ballet and breaking” offered *The New York Times*. “It’s an outgrowth of hip-hop, and Ms. Wang dances it as adroitly as Mr. Ramirez.” This award-winning duo has electrified the European scene with their choreographic language fusing technical mastery with magnetic fluidity and poetry. Hip-hop meets contemporary dance in this emotionally sophisticated performance.

Yo, Carmen

Charleston Gaillard Center | 95 Calhoun Street
Approximately 1 hour, 30 minutes

Saturday, May 27, 8:00 pm

Sunday, May 28, 2:00 pm

Sunday, May 28, 8:00 pm

María Pagés Company

The passionate María Pagés embodies the legendary character of Carmen in a vibrant ode to femininity. Accompanied by some of Spain’s most talented musicians, she stands out once again as an iconic figure of flamenco. From the tale of the sultry gypsy with a fateful destiny emerges a multifaceted, sincere, and forceful woman. Pagés sketches a portrait of the eternal feminine free of prejudice and conventions, endowed with the voice of all women. The fiery bodies of the dancers undulate and prance, their feet rooted to the floor while pounding out fierce rhythms. This company’s performances at the Festival in 2003 brought people to their feet with cheers of exuberant appreciation, just as *Yo, Carmen* surely will. “It is not often that one gets to see a true master at work, but when it happens, it is magical” (*Live*, Singapore).

SPOLETO FESTIVAL USA 2017 | OPEN STAGE DOOR OFFERINGS

L-E-V | OCD Love

College of Charleston Sottile Theatre | 44 George Street
Approximately 1 hour

Friday, June 2, 8:00 pm
Saturday, June 3, 7:00 pm
Sunday, June 4, 7:00 pm

This piece is about love that always misses—lovers out of sync. Performed to deep, pulsing grooves created live by DJ Ori Lichtik, *OCD Love* explores themes of the heart through the lens of obsessive compulsion. Choreographers Sharon Eyal and Gai Behar—stars of Israel’s thriving dance scene—focused on repetition and frustration in the mesmerizing language they created. Neil Hilborn’s poem about the condition of OCD inspired this work: “I asked her out six times in thirty seconds. She said yes after the third one, but none of them felt right so I had to keep going.” This powerful contribution from the fiercely talented dancers of L-E-V digs deep in examining the particular challenges posed by OCD for life and love.

Gallim | W H A L E

College of Charleston Sottile Theatre | 44 George Street
Approximately 1 hour, 30 minutes

Thursday, June 8, 7:00 pm
Friday, June 9, 7:00 pm
Saturday, June 10, 3:00 pm

Gallim Dance

Created by acclaimed choreographer Andrea Miller, *W H A L E* uses radical physical language and an impulsive narrative pace to juxtapose love, sex, and domesticity. Gallim Dance returns to Spoleto Festival USA (*I Can See Myself in Your Pupil*, 2010) to probe the human pursuit of love and being loved, and offers a kinetic navigation of the expectations, anxiety, vulnerability, and forgiveness surrounding this struggle. Both intimate and cinematic, *W H A L E* invites an exploration of life’s most essential themes, guided by Miller’s virtuosic and fresh choreography.

This program contains nudity.

SPOLETO FESTIVAL USA 2017 | OPEN STAGE DOOR OFFERINGS

We Love Arabs

Emmett Robinson Theatre | 54 St. Phillip Street

Approximately 1 hour

Thursday, June 8, 8:30 pm

Friday, June 9, 5:00 pm

Prolific choreographer and dancer Hillel Kogan presents *We Love Arabs*—a pithy work that examines the Arab-Israeli conflict with humor and subtlety. Earning the “Outstanding Creator of 2013” award from the Israeli Dance Critics Circle for this piece, Kogan performs with Adi Boutrous, speaking as well as navigating space together, seeking a way to break through prejudices. “Where we stand in space defines the way we move,” he suggests, translating and addressing cultural ideas in a physical world. *The Jerusalem Post* called it “witty, provocative, political and hilarious,” declaring admiration for Kogan’s “mind, originality, as well as his deep stage comprehension.” *We Love Arabs* is both strong and soft, cultivating an atmosphere where preconceptions do not block progress, and spreading a sense of exhilaration as the two dancers find a choreographic resolution.

THEATER

Murmurs

Emmett Robinson Theatre | 54 St. Phillip Street

Approximately 1 hour, 15 minutes

Saturday, May 27, 8:00 pm

Monday, May 29, 2:00 pm

Monday, May 29, 7:00 pm

AURÉLIA AND HER GHOSTS

A show by Victoria Thierrée Chaplin

What if objects could speak their own personal histories? What if walls could breathe out stories of disappointment and desires? Aurélia Thierrée returns to Spoleto Festival USA (*Aurélia's Oratorio*, 2007) with *Murmurs*—a dreamlike, largely wordless rumination on a woman's adventure into a surreal and shifting landscape—her second collaboration with Victoria Thierrée Chaplin. Accompanied by featured performers Magnus Jakobsson and Jamie Martinez, Thierrée enchants and delights in this wonderful spectacle of low-tech circus artistry, filled with visual trickery, fantastical monsters, and magical sleight of theatrical hand. Innovatively using set design, objects, and puppetry to transform everyday things into manifestations of the soul, *Murmurs* straddles the delicate line between imagination and madness.

SPOLETO FESTIVAL USA 2017 | OPEN STAGE DOOR OFFERINGS

Ramona

Emmett Robinson Theatre | 54 St. Phillip Street
Approximately 1 hour

Saturday, June 3, 6:00 pm
Sunday, June 4, 2:00 pm

Gabriadze Theatre
Written and directed by Rezo Gabriadze

A tragic tale of two trains in love, *Ramona*—a shunting engine only able to move 300 meters each way—waits in a railway station for her heroic Trans-Siberian locomotive, Ermon, to return from his journey across the railroads of Russia. Georgian playwright and director Rezo Gabriadze is the architect of a unique theatrical style—one that marries humor and heartbreak in a world of marionettes and folk elegance. Returning to Spoleto Festival USA for a second appearance (*The Battle of Stalingrad*, 2003), Gabriadze Theatre offers a production full of extraordinary scenes created from ordinary objects; the director and his puppeteers crystallize, in miniature, the joy and heartbreak of love and the unrecoverable past.

Performed in Georgian and Russian with English supertitles.

The Table

Emmett Robinson Theatre | 54 St. Philip Street
Approximately 1 hour, 15 minutes

Friday, June 9, 8:30 pm

Blind Summit Theatre
Directed by Mark Down
Puppet by Nick Barnes

Moses is a cantankerous three-man-operated puppet with a cardboard head that lives on a table. He wants to tell you an epic story about God and Moses, life and death, and puppetry—but he gets easily distracted. In the ilk of Tommy Cooper and Eddie Izzard, this table-top philosopher and comedian is the funniest piece of cardboard you will ever meet. Winner of a Fringe First award for this show, Blind Summit Theatre has received international acclaim for its brand of puppetry, earning the position of puppet directors for the London Olympic Opening Ceremonies in 2012; they were in Charleston last season creating the visual dimension of the Festival's US-premiere production of *The Little Match Girl* (2016). *The Table* occupies a welcoming space between contemporary humor and historical reference, yielding a performance that is “dazzling” (*The Scotsman*), “astonishingly accomplished” (*The Telegraph*), and “brilliantly funny” (*Time Out*).

SPOLETO FESTIVAL USA 2017 | OPEN STAGE DOOR OFFERINGS

Waiting for Godot

Dock Street Theatre | 135 Church Street
Approximately 2 hour, 30 minutes

Thursday, June 8, 8:00 pm
Sunday, June 11, 3:30 pm

Druid
Written by Samuel Beckett
Directed by Garry Hynes

On a bare road in the middle of nowhere, two world-weary friends await the arrival of the mysterious Godot. While waiting, they speculate, bicker, joke, and ponder life's great questions. As dusk begins to fall, two figures appear on the horizon.

Druid's Artistic Director Garry Hynes—who directed the Festival's production of *Kát'a Kabanová* in 2014 and Druid's production of *The Cripple of Inishmaan* presented at the 2011 Festival—returns with one of the most significant plays of the 20th century. Francis O'Connor (*The Importance of Being Earnest*, 2016; *My Cousin Rachel*, 2014) again brings his inventive designs to Dock Street Theatre for this seminal work; his “insightful, artful simplicity,” Hynes's vigor and instinct, and a magnificent cast of four—Garrett Lombard, Aaron Monaghan, Rory Nolan, and Marty Rea—together create “the freshest, funniest and most affecting production of the play in at least a quarter of a century” (*The Irish Times*).

MUSIC

Bank of America Chamber Music

Dock Street Theatre | 135 Church Street
Approximately 1 hour, 15 minutes

June 6-June 11: both 11am and 1pm performances (*Programs VIII-XI*)

Directed and hosted by Geoff Nuttall

Spectacularly skilled musicians and brilliantly crafted programs are only part of the secret to success at Bank of America Chamber Music—the series is set apart by the unmatched stage chemistry and rollicking good time these musicians have as they play together. Director and violinist Geoff Nuttall's signature wit and *joie de vivre* mark each of the 11 revelatory programs—each performed three times—whether he is playing with his St. Lawrence String Quartet, or acting as emcee for his friends. Returning favorites this season include countertenor Anthony Roth Costanzo, whose introduction on this series in 2016 was a tremendous success; percussionist Steven Schick—a “solo percussion knockout” (*ArtsATL*) last heard at the Festival in 2013; as well as oboist James Austin Smith, violinist Livia Sohn, and pianists Pedja Muzijevic and Stephen Prutsman (see p 8), among others. They are joined by several newcomers, including composer-in-residence Jaroslaw Kapuscinski, whose inventive creations feature musical instruments used to control multimedia content; composer/cellist Joshua Roman, whose versatility and adventurous spirit have gained international attention; Swiss-born Gilles Vonsattel, an “immensely talented pianist” who plays “with intelligence and imagination” (*The New York Times*); and the Rolston String Quartet, a young Canadian ensemble that won the 2016 Banff International String Quartet Competition. This series is simply not to be missed.

Full program details will be available in April 2017.

SPOLETO FESTIVAL USA 2017 | OPEN STAGE DOOR OFFERINGS

MUSIC IN TIME | Tempus Fugit

Woolfe Street Playhouse | 34 Woolfe Street
Approximately 1 hour

Sunday, May 28, 9:30 pm

Music, like culture, is rapidly changing and innovation abounds. New musical works from a new generation of composers from around the globe come together in a program featuring members of the Spoleto Festival USA Orchestra led by conductor Jeffrey Means. Included are *Tempus Fugit* by Argentina's Jose Manuel Serrano, *Abysses* by Estonia's Helena Tulve, and *Encore/Da Capo* by Italy's Luca Francesconi.

MUSIC IN TIME | Sounding Peace

Woolfe Street Playhouse | 34 Woolfe Street
Approximately 1 hour

Wednesday, May 31, 9:00 pm

We celebrate the centenary of American composer Lou Harrison with some of his generous and beautiful music integrating musical traditions from around the world. Amplifying his legacy is the work of younger composers Ted Hearne and Jonathan Holland, whose *Synchrony* is a response to the Black Lives Matter movement

Dee Dee Bridgewater*

College of Charleston Cistern Yard | 66 George Street
Approximately 1 hour, 15 minutes

Thursday, May 25, 9:00 pm

Friday, May 26, 9:00 pm

Few singers successfully carry the torch passed on by Ella Fitzgerald, Sarah Vaughan, Carmen McRae, and Betty Carter. Dee Dee Bridgewater has earned this distinction—and three Grammy Awards—in part, by mastering the same qualities as her predecessors: thinking more like an instrumentalist than a vocalist, scatting well-constructed yet improvised melodies, and interpreting songs in an original and personal way. Named a 2017 National Endowment for the Arts Jazz Master, she is set apart by an uncommon but perfectly natural talent for communicating with an audience—a charisma that led to a Tony for her theatrical performance in *The Wiz* and international recognition as a leading light of the jazz vocal tradition. Bridgewater thrilled Festival audiences in 2004, and she and her band are returning to do it again.

**General Admission Only*

SPOLETO FESTIVAL USA 2017 | OPEN STAGE DOOR OFFERINGS

Pedrito Martinez Group*

College of Charleston Cistern Yard | 66 George Street

Approximately 1 hour, 15 minutes

Saturday, May 27, 9:00 pm

Sunday, May 28, 9:00 pm

Cuban musician Pedrito Martinez's world-class status as a percussionist, singer, and bandleader has garnered a fervent following. Marrying enticing dance music with rich folklore, he and his powerhouse quartet seamlessly blend "the styles of timba, gospel, guaguanco, blues, jazz, and classical music into their own sound that bursts with energy and never ceases to groove" (*All About Jazz*). Each bandmate contributes something integral: Peruvian percussionist Jhair Sala's timing and intuition fuse with Martinez's, and the two drummers play as one; pianist Edgar Pantoja-Aleman bends genre boundaries with a constant supply of heat and skill; and bassist Yunion Terry considers his bass "one more dancer out there on the dance floor." Together, the quartet is "writing a new chapter in Cuban music history, and their shared excitement is irresistible" (NPR's *All Things Considered*).

**General Admission Only*

Butler, Bernstein & The Hot 9*

College of Charleston Cistern Yard | 66 George Street

Approximately 1 hour, 15 minutes

Thursday, June 1, 9:00 pm

As a pianist and singer, Henry Butler's place in the pantheon of New Orleans musical greats is secure. He tells stories through the rise, swing, and rumble of his fingers as they channel sounds from a diverse array of genres: jazz, Caribbean, classical, pop, blues, and R&B, among others. Trumpeter, bandleader, and arranger Steven Bernstein—a veteran of New York City's downtown scene and a Grammy-award winner—refers to himself as a "retro-futurist." The fiery unit they call the Hot 9 uses New Orleans tradition and early 20th-century blues as a launching point toward exploration that is "both historically aware and fully prepared to cut loose" (*The New York Times*).

**General Admission Only*

SPOLETO FESTIVAL USA 2017 | OPEN STAGE DOOR OFFERINGS

Charles Lloyd Quartett

Charleston Gaillard Center | 95 Calhoun Street

Approximately 1 hour, 30 minutes

Friday, June 2, 7:00 pm

Featuring Gerald Clayton, Larry Grenadier, and Eric Harland

In 2015, saxophonist and flutist Charles Lloyd was inducted as a National Endowment for the Arts Jazz Master—a distinction reserved for living legends who have made exceptional contributions to the advancement of the genre. His work is rooted in fusing jazz with non-Western musical styles, ever broadening as he continues his “compulsion to draw connections—between cultural ideals, between stylistic traditions, between modernity and what he calls ‘the wisdom of the ancients’” (*The New York Times*). Lloyd will return to Spoleto Festival USA (previously here in 2001 and 1994) with a quartet of dynamic musicians a generation or more his junior: pianist Gerald Clayton, bassist Larry Grenadier, and drummer Eric Harland. Audiences can expect astonishing “postbop fire, bluesy crosstalk and lucid incantation” (*The New York Times*), to name just a few possibilities. His endless pilgrimage as a “sound seeker” makes each performance an inimitable offering.

Evan Christopher’s Clarinet Road

Simons Center Recital Hall | 54 St. Philip Street

Approximately 1 hour

Thursday, June 8, 7:00 pm

Friday, June 9, 5:00 pm

Friday, June 9, 7:00 pm

Saturday, June 10, 7:00 pm

Evan Christopher, clarinets

Brian Seeger, guitars

Roland Guerin, basses

When he left California for New Orleans in 1994, Evan Christopher began a journey along what he calls “clarinet road,” working to honor and extend the legacies of such early Creole clarinetists as Sidney Bechet, Barney Bigard, and Omer Simeon. With a sound and style that combines virtuosity, immaculate taste, and enthusiasm, his music explores the full range of possibilities in this tradition. A creator in his own right, he composes works in the vein of the greats while bringing something of himself—“contemporary early jazz,” he calls it. At Spoleto Festival USA, his trio includes close New Orleans associates, guitarist Brian Seeger and bassist Roland Guerin. Together, they will make stirring 21st-century music drawing upon styles roughly a century old.