



For Immediate Release

March 1 – March 26, 2017

Bridge Street Theatre and Fort Salem Theater present

Souvenir: A Fantasia on the Life of Florence Foster Jenkins

by Stephen Temperley

with Alison Davy as Florence Foster Jenkins and Jay Kerr as Cosme McMoon

Directed by Flo Hayle

Musical Direction by Jay Kerr

Costumes by Caitlyn Day

Sets and Lighting by John Sowle

Sound by Carmen Borgia

Production Manager: Caedmon Holland

March 16 – 26, 2017

Bridge Street Theatre Mainstage

44 West Bridge Street, Catskill, NY

“Souvenir” Opens Bridge Street Theatre’s 2017 Subscription Season

On October 25, 1944, wealthy (and tone-deaf) soprano Florence Foster Jenkins and her accompanist Cosme McMoon performed a recital at Carnegie Hall. Tickets sold out weeks in advance; an estimated 2,000 people were turned away at the door. The world of music has never quite recovered. Come share the hilarious and touching tale of this unlikely pair in the musical “Souvenir” at Catskill’s Bridge Street Theatre March 16th through the 26th.

Opera impresario Ira Siff, who dubbed her "the anti-Callas", has said, "Jenkins was exquisitely bad, so bad that it added up to quite a good evening of theater ... There was no end to the horribleness ... They say Cole Porter had to bang his cane into his foot in order not to laugh out loud when she sang. She was that bad." The historian Stephen Pile ranked her as "the world's worst opera singer". "No one, before or since," he wrote, "has succeeded in liberating themselves quite so completely from the shackles of musical notation."

Appearing in the cast of this co-production between Bridge Street Theatre and Fort Salem Theater (who will present the production in Salem, NY this July) are soprano Alison Davy as Florence Foster Jenkins and pianist Jay Kerr as Cosme McMoon. The musical production is directed by Flo Hayle.

“Souvenir: A Fantasia on the Life of Florence Foster Jenkins” will be presented on the Bridge Street Theatre Mainstage for 8 performances only – Thursdays-Saturdays at 7:30pm and Sundays at 2:00pm from March 16-26. The Thursday March 16 preview and the Sunday March 19 matinee are “Pay-What-You-Can” performances. Advance tickets are available for \$22, \$10 for Students age 21 and under, at BrownPaperTickets.com or by calling 800-838-3006. Tickets can also be purchased at the door prior to each performance (on a space available basis) for \$25, \$10 for Students age 21 and under. However, a Season

Subscription is also available at a substantial discount – only \$100 for Bridge Street Theatre’s entire 5-play Theatre Series, of which “Souvenir” is the first. To purchase a Season Subscription, visit BrownPaperTickets.com or give them a call at 800-838-3006. The theatre is located at 44 West Bridge Street in the Village of Catskill, NY.

Events at Bridge Street Theatre are supported in part by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew M. Cuomo and the New York State Legislature and by Public Funds from the Greene County Legislature through the Cultural Fund administered in Greene County by the Greene County Council on the Arts.

For more information, visit the theatre online at BridgeSt.org.

Performance Calendar:

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by Stephen Temperley

with Alison Davy as Florence Foster Jenkins and Jay Kerr as Cosme McMoon

Directed by Flo Hayle

with Costumes by Caitlyn Day, Sets and Lights by John Sowle, and Sound by Carmen Borgia

Production Manager: Caedmon Holland

Thursday March 16 @ 7:30pm (“Pay What You Can” preview)

Friday March 17 @ 7:30pm (Opening Night)

Saturday March 18 @ 7:30pm

Sunday March 19 @ 2:00pm (“Pay What You Can” performance)

Thursday March 23 @ 7:30pm

Friday March 24 @ 7:30pm

Saturday March 25 @ 7:30pm

Sunday March 26 @ 2:00pm

Bridge Street Theatre Mainstage

44 West Bridge Street, Catskill, NY

Tickets:

Advance tickets available at BrownPaperTickets.com or by calling 1-800-838-3006

General Admission \$22, \$10 for Students age 21 and under

A Season Subscription to Bridge Street Theatre’s entire 5-play Theatre Series is also available for for only \$100 from BrownPaperTickets.com or by calling 1-800-838-3006

Tickets can also be purchased at the door prior to each performance (on a space available basis) for \$25, \$10 for Students age 21 and under.

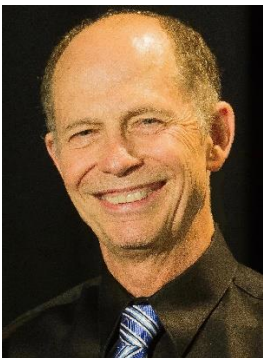
Bios:

STEPHEN TEMPERLEY (*Playwright*) Born in London, Stephen Temperley first came to the U.S. as a teenager. He trained as an actor at the American Academy of Dramatic Arts. The first of his plays to be produced was *BESIDE THE SEASIDE* at the Hudson Guild, directed by Vivian Matalon who has directed all of his work since. Other plays include *MONEY/MERCY*, which was first produced at the Chelsea Theatre center and then as part of the first HBO New Writers' Workshop, and *DANCE WITH ME*, which was first seen at the 18th Street Theatre and later at Centenary Theatre Company. Workshops include a musical, *THAT KIND OF WOMAN*, for Dodger Productions and *IN THE COUNTRY OF THE FREE. THE PILGRIM PAPERS*, a satirical comedy about the Plymouth Colony, was produced by the Berkshire Theatre

Festival in their '06 season. *SOUVENIR* was first seen at the York Theatre before going on to the Berkshire Theatre Festival and Broadway. It has since become one of the most produced plays in the US. Recently, it opened to rave reviews in Berlin and is slated for productions in South America, Australia, and Scandinavia.



ALISON DAVY (*Florence Foster Jenkins*) Praised by Opera Orchestra of New York conductor Eve Queler for her “beautiful expression and style,” Alison Davy has appeared in opera and oratorio both nationally and internationally. She has performed with, among others, Washington National Opera, Encompass New Opera Theatre, Handel Choir of Baltimore, Centro Musica Antica in Italy, Parma Symphony Orchestra, Newark-Granville Symphony Orchestra and the Choral Arts Society of Washington, DC outreach program. Ms. Davy was also featured as a guest artist at Lincoln Center’s Bruno Walter Auditorium, singing Spohr’s *Sechs Deutsche Lieder* and was selected to perform at The White House for President and Mrs. Clinton. This season Ms. Davy sings as soloist in Brahms’ *Ein deutsches Requiem* with Newton Community Chorus; Händel’s *Judas Maccabaeus* with Greenwich Choral Society; performs Steven Lebetkin’s *Six Songs on Poems by Walt Whitman* in a world premiere recording with the City of Prague Philharmonic and Schubert’s *Der Hirt auf dem Felsen* with Phoenix Ensemble in New York. Recent engagements include Haydn’s *The Creation* with Choral Society of the Hamptons; Dierdre in the World Premiere of Richard Pearson Thomas’ *A Wake or a Wedding* with Encompass New Opera Theatre; Britten’s *Les Illuminations* with East Bay Chamber Orchestra in San Francisco; Violetta in scenes from *La Traviata* at the National Opera Center; and contemporary music recitals at the Dimenna Center in New York City and Kingston Festival of the Arts, where she also performed with renowned flautist Eugenia Zukerman. This versatile artist has sung as a soloist at the Holders International Music Festival in Barbados, at the Mann Center in Philadelphia and has participated in the Caramoor Festival with Maestro William Crutchfield. Awards include finalist in the Vera Scammon Competition, semifinalist in the Oratorio Society of New York Competition, recipient of the Todd Duncan Award from Annapolis Opera and the George Woodhead Prize from Peabody Conservatory. Alison has served as the Development Director for Bridge Street Theatre since March of 2015.



JAY KERR (*Cosme McMoon and Musical Director*) For most of his fifty-two years in show business, Jay Kerr operated a music studio in New York City, literally and figuratively between Broadway and Carnegie Hall, where he arranged music, worked with songwriters on new projects, instructed singers for stage, cabaret, and recording (www.jaykerr.com), and wrote songs and incidental music for cabaret and theater. Beginning his professional musical career as a church organist at the age of fourteen, Kerr held cue cards for television’s Captain Kangaroo, produced military and USO shows during the Vietnam conflict, shared the bill with Bette Midler at New York’s Continental Baths, coached Phil Silvers for his Tony Award winning role in *FORUM*, wrote children’s musicals for Broadway and television, taught in a military school,

parochial schools, acting schools and universities, and served as the principal of a junior high school. As a vocal instructor and voice coach, he has shaped musical performances by, among many others, Sandy Dennis, Tovah Feldshuh, Sally Ann Howes, Frank Gorshin, Bob Gunton, James Naughton, Charlotte Rae, and Joanne Woodward. Currently Artistic Director of Fort Salem Theater in Washington County, Jay has worked with Florence Hayle for over thirty years.

FLO HAYLE (*Director*) Flo Hayle has participated in all aspects of theatre throughout her career. And accomplished and beloved cabaret singer, she has known many of the greats including Elaine Stritch, Liza Minelli, and Hildegard. She has appeared in dozens of plays and musicals including SOPHIE by Steve Allen and, more recently, SENIOR MOMENTS at the Fort Salem Theater. She has been seen in TV commercials for Total Cereal and Volkswagen, among others. As a director and producer, she was producing Off-Broadway long before there was anything known as "Off-Broadway", was casting director for Muriel Cigars, Coppertone, and Maybelline, and director of PRISONER OF SECOND AVENUE at the Ghent Playhouse. Flo hosts a weekly radio interview show called "Arts Alive" on 98.5FM and 93.5FM.

JOHN SOWLE (*Set and Light Designer*) is Managing Director of Bridge Street Theatre. He founded Kaliyuga Arts in 1986 with his partner Steven Patterson and has received multiple awards for his directing and design work on their Los Angeles, San Francisco and New York productions. Most recently he designed Bridge Street Theatre's production of "The Tavern," and directed and designed their productions of "Frankenstein," "Holiday Memories," "The Epic of Gilgamesh," "The Killing & The Love Death" (late plays of William Inge), and "Grinder's Stand" by Oakley Hall III. John has an undergraduate degree in mathematics from M.I.T and a PhD in Dramatic Art from UC Berkeley.

CARMEN BORGIA (*Sound Designer*) is a musician and sound designer. He has designed and mixed films for PBS, HBO, IFC and many film festivals. He has also released two CD's of his own work, "North" and "The Red Circle Line". In 2009 his musical, SOUTH, premiered at Dixon Place in New York City. He operates out of studios in Catskill and The Bronx, doing sound-for-picture work and music recording. He can be found at Magpie Bookshop Saturday afternoons at his Ukulele Camp, where anyone can learn to uke. He is also a regular performer at the Catskill Farmers Market on Sundays.

CAEDMON HOLLAND (*Production Stage Manager*) is a 25-year old actor from Delmar, NY. He grew up learning theater and at the age of six started attending The New York State Theater Institute's summer theatre program. He continued with this until the age of 14 when, during his high school years, he started focusing more on film. At 19, Caedmon transferred to the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque. While there, he was part of the only Western Theater school performance in the world to be invited to participate in the First International Asian Theater Festival in 2010. Caedmon graduated UNM with a BA in Theater in December of 2014. Since then, he's been back home in upstate NY, performing locally with Bridge Street Theatre in LUCKY LINDY and Kaaterskill Actors Theater in CHRISTMAS IN JULY among others, and trying to build his resume for a move to NYC or LA. He was also Stage Manager for Bridge Street Theatre's productions of "The Tavern" and "Frankenstein."

Further Information:

To contact Bridge Street Theatre directly, email contact@bridgest.org or call their offices at 518-943-3894.

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