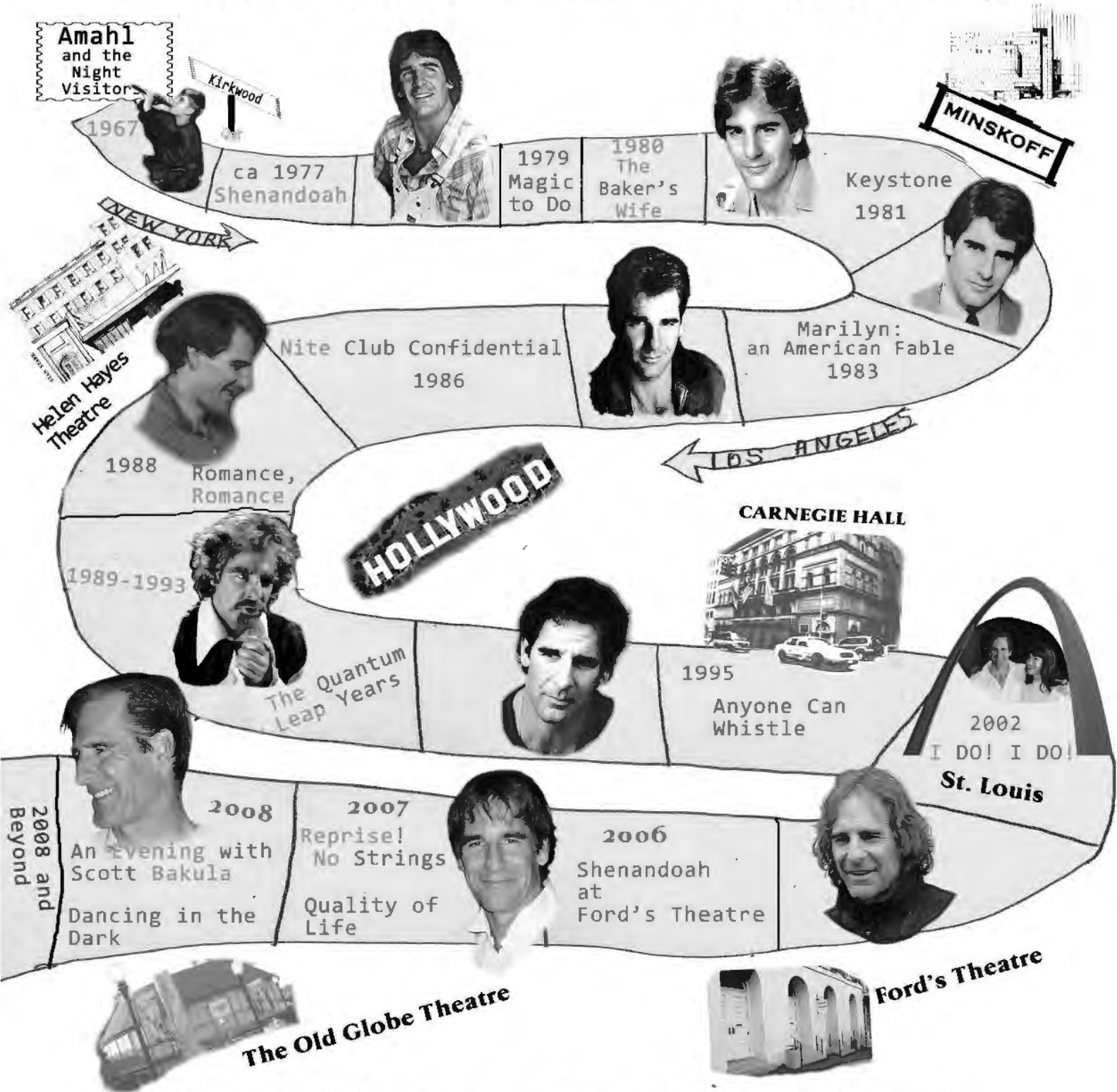


# The Observer

From the Files of Project Quantum Leap



## Roadmap to Stardom

Issue 37

July 2008

**CONTENTS**

**Program for *An Evening with Scott Bakula*.....**  
 provided by Dennis Deal.....2  
***An Evening with Scott Bakula—As I Remember It***  
 by Jo Fox.....3  
***An Evening with Scott Bakula—Reminiscences***  
 by Anita L. Balestino; drawings by Maryse Worrallo .....8  
***Dancing in the Dark at the Old Globe Theatre***  
 by Jo Fox.....16  
**Roadmap to Stardom: Scott Bakula’s Theatre Career**  
**Part 4, by Sharon Major.....17**  
**Dennis Deal to the Rescue, An e-mail exchange .....27**  
**New Reference Book Features *Quantum Leap* .....32**

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**ON OUR COVER**

Starting with Scott’s photo as Amahl at the age of thirteen, a sampling of publicity headshots traverse a forty-year career path from stage to screen and back, while marking the road to stardom. (Foreground photos by Jo Fox)

**TEN YEARS LATER**

Still only \$5 an issue, with exclusive interviews, articles and photographs, *The Observer* endures. Having now reached my tenth anniversary as editor, I am astonished by the quality, diversity, and sheer quantity (20 issues) of material that we have presented since I took on this task in the spring of 1998. So whether you have stuck with us over the years or are new to *Quantum Leap* fandom, I’m grateful for your part in keeping the Leap alive.

As well you know, I am constantly seeking fresh material to present to our faithful readers. Along the way, many of these same readers have willingly shared their time, talent, and expertise to make this publication an on-going success. I hope their involvement has revealed hidden or neglected abilities, as it has done for me, and that they have found themselves richer—as have we—for their contributions. And on that note...

**THANK YOU TO OUR CONTRIBUTORS**

Where would we be without Jo Fox? Jo’s eye for composition and detail, her eagerness to offer her time and insight on the various projects in which Scott has been involved, and her talent with the camera and photoshop, once again demonstrate what a valuable asset she is to our staff.

In addition to melding keen perception and what can only be a photographic memory, Anita Balestino possesses an uncanny ability to describe the January performances of *An Evening with Scott Bakula* at Sidney Harmon Hall. Accompanied by Maryse Worrallo’s incomparable drawings, this issue proves to be another keepsake that will be cherished and read time and time again.



Next year’s Convention celebrating the twentieth anniversary of the beginning of *Quantum Leap* is getting closer. Scheduled for March 27-29, 2009 at the Beverly Garland Holiday Inn, near NBC/Universal studios, it is going to be a jammed-packed weekend. Organizers have been working tremendously hard, and have an enormous list of guest stars. Included in that list are *Quantum Leap* stars **Scott Bakula** and **Dean Stockwell**, along with over 40 other actors who appeared in the series. Co-executive producer **Deborah Pratt** will attend, as well as producer **Charles Floyd Johnson** (now exec. producer of *NCIS*.) A schedule of individual appearances hasn’t been released yet, but you’ll be sure to see stars at any time during the event. Complete information and an updated guest roster are available at [www.leapback2009.com](http://www.leapback2009.com)

The latest addition is a *Quantum Leap* trivia contest between Scott Bakula and super-*Quantum Leap* fan Jay Schwartz! We’ve heard these two bantering before, but with the stakes so high, what’s going to happen when the questions get really tough?

Looking for memorabilia? This will be the ideal time and place. If the website’s new and improved dealer’s page is any indication, you can count on some serious buying and selling. And you certainly won’t want to pass up the charity auction that will offer a chance at many one-of-a-kind items. Remember, all tickets cover all three days, making this a fair price for an astonishing opportunity to meet the stars and make lasting memories. But they’re selling quickly, with the two most expensive levels already sold out. We hope to see you there.

**KEEPING UP WITH SCOTT**

Since our last issue we have been trying to keep up with Scott’s busy schedule. He sang, danced, played piano and poured his heart out for us in Washington, D.C. in January. Then in April he completed a six-week run of a new musical, *Dancing in the Dark* in San Diego. Our coverage of both of these shows begins on the next page.

In between these two onstage appearances, Scott guest-starred in the *Boston Legal* episode “Glow in the Dark,” playing piano and singing, “Once Upon a Time”—a song he performed ‘once upon a time’ long ago (1983) in a revue called *Broadway Babylon*. Tracy Ullman’s *State of the Union* series for Showtime featured Scott in some tiny skits, and in May, Scott was on location in the Midwest filming *The Informant* with Matt Damon, a feature film set for release next spring. Whew!

**The Observer** No. 37, July 2008. Published semi-annually by Project Quantum Leap, an unofficial fan club. **SUBSCRIPTIONS:** *The Observer* is available by single copy or as a three-issue subscription from our website [www.projectquantumleap.com](http://www.projectquantumleap.com) or by check payable to Project Quantum Leap to the mailing address below. Issues mailed within the USA are \$5 each and sent First Class; each issue to Canada/Mexico is \$5.50 and all other overseas addresses are \$7.50, sent by Air Mail. All funds must be in US Dollars. **DISCLAIMER:** *The Observer* is a non-profit, semi-annual journal published by and for fans of *Quantum Leap*, who are solely responsible for its content. The copyright in the series *Quantum Leap* and its components is owned by Universal City Studios, Inc., which reserves all rights therein. This publication does not intend to infringe upon said copyright, nor any copyright owned by Belisarius Productions, Universal Television, Universal Pictures, Universal City Studios, Inc. or National Broadcasting Company, Inc., none of which has any responsibility for this publication or for the fan club that publishes it. All other material © 2008 Project Quantum Leap and its respective writers, artists, and photographers. All rights in any contribution to this publication other than the right of first publication herein revert to the contributor following publication herein. Submissions and questions can be directed to our staff at [www.projectquantumleap.com](http://www.projectquantumleap.com). Mailing address: P.O. Box 30784, Knoxville, TN 37930-0784. See back cover for membership info, and so help me if you tear it off the zine you’ll live to regret it! There are rules to Quantum Leaping....

**The Program for the Ford's Theatre Presentation**  
**AN EVENING WITH SCOTT BAKULA**  
**at Sidney Harman Hall**  
**Conceived and arranged by Dennis Deal**

The official program was a nice souvenir for theatergoers on the evenings of January 17 and 18, 2008. However, it gave absolutely no clue to the names for all the songs that were included in the show, leaving fans scrambling to recall specific favorites in an attempt to compile a makeshift list after the fact.

Then—Fanfare, please—Dennis Deal came to the rescue, providing us with the final version for *An Evening's* program. Many, many thanks to Dennis for this and his answers to my incessant questions on page 27.



Drawing by Maryse Worrallo

**ACT I**

I Believe in You  
Cool/Something's Coming

Trouble (*The Music Man*)

1957: 77 Sunset Strip, Mona Lisa, Round and Round, Candid Camera, Love Is a Many Splendored Thing, Cheyenne, Blueberry Hill, Hawaiian Eye, Peggy Sue, Sounds of Silence, Star Trek Theme

Amahl and the Night Visitors (recorded excerpt)

Light My Fire  
If I Were a Rich Man (*Fiddler on the Roof*)  
Alas for You (*Godspell*)

Man of La Mancha – Medley

Everybody Says Don't (*Anyone Can Whistle*)  
Into the Woods  
Another Hundred People (*Company*)

I'll Send You Roses (*Marilyn: An American Fable*)  
The Promise of Greatness (*3 Guys Naked*)  
Words He Doesn't Say (*Romance/Romance*)

Pretty Women  
Hey, There  
I've Grown Accustomed to Her Face  
How to Handle a Woman  
It's a Well Known Fact (*I Do! I Do!*)

Climb Every Mountain  
Somewhere Over the Rainbow – DEHS Girls Ensemble  
Imagine

**ACT II**

**Rodgers & Hart Medley:**  
I Wish I Were in Love Again  
My Funny Valentine  
Johnny One Note  
You're Nearer  
The Lady is a Tramp

How Deep is the Ocean

Harlem Nocturne – Film Noir Vignette

Born Too Late (by Mark Saltzman)

Dreaming of Mister Porter (by Dennis Deal)  
It's All Right With Me  
Ridin' High  
You Do Something to Me  
From This Moment On  
So in Love

A Foggy Day

Lullaby of Birdland  
Everybody's Boppin' (*Nite Club Confidential*)  
Cloudburst (*Nite Club Confidential*)

I've Heard It All Before (*Shenandoah*)

I Could Go on Singing  
I'm Nothing Without You  
The Curtain Falls

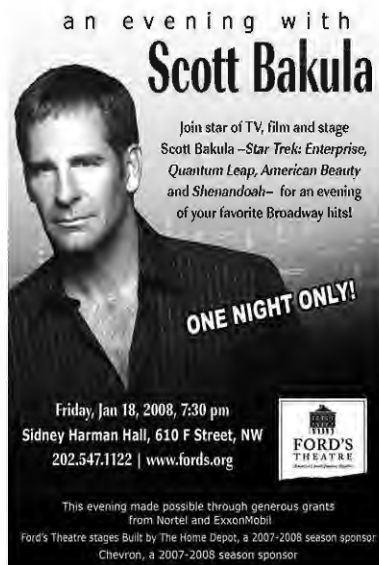
## AN EVENING WITH SCOTT BAKULA

### As I Remember It

By Jo Fox

To say that this event was special for everyone involved is almost an understatement. To begin with, Scott Bakula had never done a one man show before; in the end, he had never before revealed so much of his personality on stage. As Scott told the audience, he almost hung up the phone when Paul Tetreault of Ford's Theatre called and asked him to do this. "Your fans will come," Paul told him, when Scott asked who would come to such a show.

When I found out this was going to happen, I was immediately on the Internet making plane and hotel reservations, even before getting the tickets to the "Evening." My birthday was in January and the general audience performance would happen on my birthday. What a wonderful present that would be.



As things turned out, the information was a wee bit off. Apparently, the "open to the public" general performance was Friday, not Thursday. Thursday would be a VIP performance, open to Ford memberships above \$250. I've been a member of Ford's Theatre since *Shenandoah* but that was feeling a bit steep until Anita asked me if I wanted to go in with her on the membership (which allowed one guest). I was in. Then the dress rehearsal was opened up to members, and thus I was able to see all three performances.

After Scott got the call from Paul Tetreault, he immediately called Dennis Deal, his friend and associate for over twenty years. Fans might remember that Dennis Deal was the talent behind Scott and Chelsea's St. Louis production of "I Do! I Do!" Dennis and Scott also have a history together with "Nite Club Confidential." Numbers from both shows were included in this "Evening with Scott Bakula."

Dennis told Scott he would call back in a couple of days with some ideas. A comment, that this was the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of "West Side Story" opening on Broadway got the creative juices flowing. Then there was Paul's edict that the songs must be in the American Song Book, which consisted of some 8,723 songs. It seemed a daunting task. That Scott and Dennis were up to the challenge was certainly evident in the fantastic show staged at the Harman Center in Washington, DC. When the show ended and I was back in my room, I began writing like crazy, making extensive notes of the production. I saw all three performances, so I had the chance to fill in the notes each night. The program did not contain a list of the songs Scott chose for the evening, so this report is strictly from my notes and my memory, with a little help from Dennis Deal's list, after the fact. My apologies, in advance, for any errors or omissions.

Coming on the heels of "Quality of Life," this "Evening with Scott Bakula" was a hit. Seats were filled for all three nights and each performance was slightly different, as is the case with any live performance. Some songs, such as *If I Were a Rich Man*, were longer during the rehearsal night and others were cut entirely. Although I got the feeling that the comments between sets were scripted, there was quite a bit of ad-libbing, especially on Friday night which played to the most enthusiastic audience of any performance.

Scott began as if he were in a dressing room back stage practicing in front of a mirror. He wore a bathrobe over his clothes and had his back to the audience. Looking in the mirror, he crooned *I Believe in You*. When an offstage voice called for places, Scott gave his image one last look, then flew into the wings to return shortly in tee and jeans, belting out "West Side Story's" *Cool* and *Somewhere*. Scott then talked about "West Side Story" changing the Broadway scene and a musical about juvenile delinquents winning a Tony. Scott asked the audience if they knew the musical and admonished us to keep quiet if we had already seen a previous show. The first night I heard him ask us this question, I thought he was still talking about "West Side Story." Friday night we kept quiet, but a man at the back of the theatre yelled out, "Music Man" and the audience roared with laughter. Scott promised he wouldn't ask us any more questions. But the man was right, as Scott led into the song *Trouble (in River City)*.

What made this night special? For one, there was the name of the show. Scott and Dennis tried out a few titles: "Scott Bakula: It's a Small World." "Six Degrees of Scott Bakula." "Scott Bakula Sings the American Song Book" – which sounded like a long night. "Scott Bakula, Who Knew?" That got a huge laugh from the audience. Scott said he still gets that from people not familiar with his Broadway and theatre background. In the end, they decided to keep it simple.

Once the title was chosen, the songs had to be selected. The 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of “West Side Story” coincided very nicely with Scott’s life and so the songs of the evening became a progression of music appropriate to each decade of Scott’s life and, as he told the audience, had a somewhat eclectic feel to them, following Scott’s own taste in music.

As a child of the ’50s in St. Louis, Scott was first introduced to radio and then he discovered that new device, a television set. He sang a medley of TV themes interlaced with pop songs of that era—77 *Sunset Strip*; *Mona Lisa*; *Hawaiian Eye* (before there was “Magnum”); *Cheyenne*; (*Find a Wheel an It Goes*) *Round and Round*; *Love Is a Many Splendid Thing*; and *Peggy Sue*.

Then came the tumultuous ’60s and many people began looking inward – to the *Sound of Silence* - while others were looking outward to space and beyond. The audience was already laughing when the music to *Star Trek* began playing, so it was hard to hear Scott reciting the words, “Space, the Final Frontier.” (*Star Trek* first began airing in 1966.) Through the laughter I heard Scott quip, “Who knew?” The audience howled, drowning out the comment about Bill Shatner and PriceLine.com

It was during this decade that Scott made his singing debut in “Amahl and the Night Visitors.” Ron Jenkins, who cast Scott in this role at the First Presbyterian Church, was in the audience for this performance. Scott said if it weren’t for Ron, he probably would not be here this night.

Scott’s lifelong love of music led to his being a part of a rock-and-roll band that played in the basement – before there were garage bands. *Light My Fire*, which he claimed to be one of his mother’s favorite songs, came from that era. A production of “Fiddler on the Roof” became an ambitious project during his senior year of high school, Scott claimed he was the skinniest, most Presbyterian Tevye ever to sing *If I Were a Rich Man*.

Also that year, Scott did *Godspell* for church before the musical made a splash on the pop culture scene. *Godspell* would have a life-changing impact on him. Although a bit reluctant to tell this story, Scott said he would share it anyway. He was in college when he was asked to do the lead of Jesus in a tour of *Godspell*. To take the lead, he had to ask his parents if he could quit school. Reluctantly they agreed. The tour folded before it began, but it was too late to re-enroll in school. Living at home, he remarked that it was very quiet around the dining room table for the next couple of months. While in St. Louis, as a 21-year-old, he had his first encounter with Don Quixote. Not long after this first performance of *Man of La Mancha*, Scott left St. Louis for New York with a few hundred dollars in his pocket and a change of career path from lawyer to actor.

Scott’s first professional acting job was with the road company of *Shenandoah*. He toured with several productions of the show, earning his Equity card. *Shenandoah* was also the first Broadway show he ever saw and it starred John Cullum. John Cullum would later guest star on *Quantum Leap* in the *Man of*

*La Mancha* episode, “Catch a Falling Star.” Hey, six degrees of Scott Bakula! Scott said that the Don Quixote role still haunts him to this day, leading into the medley he did on **Quantum Leap** – *Man of La Mancha, Dulcinea, Impossible Dream*.

Comments about people telling him not to go to New York led into *Everybody Says Don’t* from “Anyone Can Whistle.”

Scott told the audience that it took him seven years from the time he left St. Louis until he had his first Broadway show. Just another overnight sensation (tongue planted firmly in cheek). The show was “Marilyn: An American Fable,” and Scott sang the love song from that show, ending it before the final word by telling us that the song was cut from the show before it opened and that two weeks later the show folded. But for him, it was still magical. He had his Broadway opening night, the Klieg lights, Sardi’s, the limos, the whole migilla.

When this show collapsed, Scott said a little off-Broadway show he had turned down to do “Marilyn” called him back. It was “Three Guys Naked from the Waist Down.” They weren’t, but when that title went up, there were a lot of phone complaints from the neighbors. Scott sang *Promise of Greatness* and did a Ted Klausterman bit from that musical.

In 1986, Scott left NYC for Los Angeles to do “Nite Club Confidential” with Dennis Deal. This was a hit and garnered him recognition and TV roles. Then in the spring of 1988, Scott returned to Broadway for “Romance, Romance.” Because the writers were on strike! (The writers were also on strike in January 2008 when this “Evening with Scott Bakula” played the Harmon.) Scott sang *Words He Doesn’t Say*. Scott quipped that he wasn’t one to hold a grudge, but he couldn’t understand all the fuss about some great props and staging, and a guy with half his face covered by a white mask who could hold a note a really long time. Though nominated for a Tony for “Romance, Romance,” he lost out to Michael Crawford for “Phantom of the Opera.” There was applause to that, to which he remarked that he was still astounded that people knew that about him.

Scott then sang songs he said were a tribute to some of the great stars of musical theatre. The medley led off with Sondheim’s, *Pretty Women*, one of my favorite songs of the “Evening.”

A highlight for most of the audience was a ’60’s-style rap rendition of *Climb Every Mountain*, complete with colored glasses and exaggerated movements. It was a riot.

*Over the Rainbow* sung by the Female Ensemble of the Duke Ellington School for the Arts came next and this led into *Imagine*. Scott played the piano in accompaniment. In a tribute to John Lennon, (and a nod to *Quantum Leap*’s “The Leap Home”) Scott sang a new stylization of *Imagine*. A fifteen minute stretch break ended the first part of the Evening.

At the opening of Act II, Scott came out with slicked back hair and a tux, and quipped about us in the audience not getting the note about a change. Someone yelled something from the back of the theatre. Scott said he couldn’t hear but it sounded like

something nice. Act II was indeed a change. The whole second half was a salute to the musicals and times of the '30s and '40s.

His first number was *I Wish I Was in Love Again*. This song came from "Babes in Arms," and was followed by more hits from that Rodgers and Hart show. Then he did a film noir bit (that was a hoot) about a guy who is an occasional drinker, the kind of guy who walks in for a beer and wakes up in Singapore with a full beard. He tells us he is in DC and walks into a bar—a dive, where he stands out like a pearl onion on a banana split. He meets a woman who looks like she climbed the ladder of success one wrong after another. Chelsea Field comes out to a resounding applause. They talk about this and that, and Chelsea tells him if he has nothing better to do to come see her. After she exits the stage, Scott says, "At least the night is still young." From offstage Chelsea calls, "I hold that!" Then he orders another drink. Next stop—Singapore. It was a wonderful bit and as I remember it, I keep seeing it in black and white.

Chelsea came back on stage for more with Scott. She didn't talk to the audience as Scott did, but together they sang *Born Too Late* and *Dreaming of Mr. Porter*, the latter one written by Dennis Deal. Together Scott and Chelsea also sang *So in Love* and then Chelsea left the stage. Scott talked about wanting to bring his own piano but something about the cost nixed that. So he used the stage piano for *A Foggy Day* and sang in a smoky kind of voice. I don't know if this was a tribute to the Brits who came to see the "Evening," or if it was just one of Scott's favorite songs. Years ago, I heard Judy Garland sing *A Foggy Day* when she brought her Carnegie Hall show to Orlando and it's been a favorite of mine ever since.

The rest of Act II was much jazzier. It led off with *Lullaby of Birdland* and segued into *Cloudburst*, which included scatting and a lot of fast-paced lyrics. Scott informed us that this song was from "Nite Club Confidential" and that it nearly killed him when he sang it.

Scott first came to Washington, D.C. and Ford's Theatre in 1980 and fell in love with both the city and the theatre—except for the rickety chairs. "Evening" was presented to help raise money for the Ford's restoration project, which would include new seating. ☺ Fans remember his 2006 appearance in Jeff Calhoun's fantastic staging of "Shenandoah." For these performances, Scott reprised *I've Heard It All Before*, belting it out as he had done at Ford's.

All too soon, this "Evening with Scott Bakula" was winding down. The show had to end so that the VIP reception could begin, but when Scott sang, *I Could Go on Singing* I really wished there were more. Actually, my biggest wish is that this whole "Evening" could be put on CD so we could hear those songs again.

Chelsea returned to the stage and together Scott and she sang *Without You*. They both thanked the audience and the fans for making the night special. Chelsea left the stage and Scott told us all to get home safely.



Photos from the  
VIP reception  
following  
Friday evening's  
performance  
by Jo Fox



## AN EVENING WITH SCOTT BAKULA

Reminiscences by Anita L. Balestino

Drawings by Maryse Worrallo

*Considerations of space and an imperfect memory allow me to touch on only a few of the highlights of Scott's astonishing performances in this special benefit for Ford's Theatre. As well, the text does not precisely recount a single program but rather combines outstanding moments from all three public presentations. This recollection can never offer an adequate tribute to the exceptional artistry and creativity Scott displayed in these 'Evenings.' But it is a humble attempt.*

(Dress Rehearsal) January 16, (Performances) January 17 and 18, 2008; Sidney Harman Hall, Washington, DC.

If ever a Scott Bakula fan could imagine a fantasy concert in which Scott performed the music associated with his career that we most love, and then could stretch that imagination to contrive a recital of diverse material that vividly highlighted his astonishing talent and versatility, these concerts in Harman Hall would far exceed those fantasies. Scott's singing voice – full and rich, supple and stirring – could be powerful, resonant, and dynamic when he chose to make it so; or hushed, tender, and poignant at other times; and in yet other instances playful and witty or downright comedic. In the course of this concert, Scott traversed a multitude of musical styles from serious musical theater pieces that were nearly operatic in nature to much frothier fare. He went from classic Broadway and American pop standards to straight-ahead jazz and back again with no apparent strain. In the various medleys, he navigated steep key modulations with the same flawless ease, belying the true technical difficulty of those feats. He proved, if ever proof were needed, that he could *swing, scat, and sell a song* with the best of them. What is more, Scott didn't merely stand on stage and sing. Rather he *enacted* the songs, his face and body assuming the expression, bearing, and style of movement of his character so completely that he himself seemed to disappear into the music and the role. He moved over the entire stage, adding evocative looks, gestures, and movements that gave the eye of the audience something pertinent to regard, the mind something relevant to reflect on, and the emotions something palpable to feel, while the ear delighted in the magnificent sound of his voice. In between songs, he not only kept up a running commentary that stitched the musical numbers together, but he also bantered with the audience in effortless camaraderie, putting them instantly at ease and placing them firmly in the orbit of his luminous star.

There is no way that Scott could have given any more generously of himself – his seemingly boundless energy, his well-honed showmanship, his prodigious talent – than he did for these benefit shows. By the end of the evening when Scott sang these lines from *The Curtain Falls*, "People say I was made for this," many in the audience could only shake their heads in awe and admiration and murmur to themselves, "You certainly were!" Even those of us, who have been fans for many years and who flattered ourselves that we *knew* how

gifted and creative Scott is, didn't really have a clue about the depth and breadth of his enormous talent until we experienced these concerts.

### Prologue:

A square, gilded mirror descends from the flies at stage left. Scott enters from the wings on that same side of the stage, wearing a long dressing gown over his clothes and whistling breezily. As if by chance, he catches sight of his reflection and hails it in a deep, *Brooklynese* rumble. "Hello, *Gawgiss!* (*gorgeous*)" he mimics, invoking the spirit of Barbra Streisand. As he pretends to experiment with openings for the show, he sings just part of the first phrase from the opening number of *Cabaret*, "Willkommen, *Bienvenue*," before discarding that idea with a disgruntled, "Terrible!" He faces the mirror squarely and tries again, singing the line, "All I ever needed was the music and the mirror," from *A Chorus Line*, while he sketches a few dance steps in place and accompanies them with exaggerated arm movements. On Thursday night after huge wet snow flakes had fallen all day in DC, Scott added in an anxious and disheartened aside, "Nobody'll probably even be there with the weather," then let out a forlorn and audible sigh as he discarded that potential opening too. The audience loved it! Finally, he settles on serenading his own image with the self-affirming, "I Believe in You," mugging comically for the mirror to illustrate the lyrics and garnering appreciative laughs from the audience. When he sings about the "bold, brave spring of the tiger" in his walk, he executes three loopy, little leaps, accompanied on the piano by three dissonant, ascending chords that accentuate his clowning. But just as Scott turns up the volume to belt out, "I believe in you," a disembodied voice calls him to "Places, Mr. Bakula, for the top of the show!" Scott breaks off singing and captures his own eyes in the mirror again. In an emphatic murmur he admonishes his reflection, "Be cool!" Waiting a slow beat, he then makes a panicky, headlong dash off the stage and into the wings.



Photo courtesy of Maryse Worrallo

### Act I

Scott reappears on stage wearing brown jeans and a dark-brown t-shirt that bears the semi-silhouetted image of John Coltrane and his saxophone. The informal costume and Scott's



lean, muscular build give him every appearance of being the young street tough he soon will portray. In honor of the fiftieth anniversary of the premiere of *West Side Story* on Broadway, but also with a clever allusion to the advice he just gave to his mirror image, he sings 'Cool.' His performance coiled and edgy, he takes on the disaffected indifference of an antisocial, urban youth. But his characterization is so genuine, so unpretentious that he even makes the song's dated '50's beat slang, "Daddio," sound completely authentic and natural. In vivid contrast to 'Cool,' Scott performs the next selection from *West Side Story*, 'Something's Comin,' with all the impassioned yearning of one whose fragile hope survives despite a life where hostility and violence conspire to extinguish it. His voice soft, intense, and full of longing, he stretches his arms out eagerly to the alluring prize that waits, "just out of sight." Eventually, Scott interweaves strains of 'Cool' and even 'Tonight' as counterpoint to 'Something's Comin.' He sings, "Turn off the juice boy," and sustains a note on that last word that is jarringly discordant with the accompaniment playing behind him. His dissonant tone not only creates strong musical tension that reflects the mood of the original score but also remains absolutely clean and true despite the persistent pull of the melody in his ear. He holds that note until it almost intrudes into the next phrase, but then sweeps an outstretched hand sideways in the air and takes up the verse again, singing with more vigor and volume, "I got a feeling there's a miracle due..." Now approaching the end of the medley, he quotes strains of 'Tonight' and sings in a hushed, eager, expectant voice, "Tonight, tonight, won't be just any night," Finally, while Brad Ellis plays a few measures of Bernstein's legendary, syncopated, tag ending for 'Cool,' Scott repeats, "Tonight," beginning the tone very softly and building a slow, sustained, and stunning crescendo to conclude the number.

On that inclement Thursday night, Scott now pauses to greet the audience with a relieved and hearty, "You made it!" and to thank them sincerely for coming to the theater despite the weather. After mentioning that Paul Tetreault, Producing Director of Ford's Theatre, had limited him to performing songs from The American Songbook, "roughly 8,734 songs," Scott does a little riff about the dilemma he and Dennis Deal faced over what to name the show. Reading some hilarious suggestions from folded legal paper that he produces from his pocket, he lists, "Scott Bakula Sings the Kitchen Sink," or "...My Mother's Favorite Songs," or "Six Degrees of Scott Bakula," and best of all, "Scott Bakula: Who Knew?" alluding to the public's relative unfamiliarity with his singing talent. His witty proposals for show titles all serve to put the audience at ease and elicit their laughter. Soon, however, he returns to *West Side Story* and praises the ground breaking effect Bernstein, Sondheim, Jerome Robbins, "with a little help from Will Shakespeare," had on musical theatre when their show premiered. He marvels that in 1957 the show that won the Tony Award for best new musical was one about juvenile delinquency, and then turns to the audience to provide the title. On Friday night, Scott warns anyone who had already seen his show not to respond and expectantly surveys the faces in front of the footlights with arms outstretched to invite an answer. Suddenly, a male voice calls out from the balcony, "Music

Man!" Scott turns in the direction from which the sound came as his face falls in dismay and his entire body seems to deflate. "Awwwww..." he exclaims, the tone of the word descending in pitch with the same acute disappointment. For a moment, Scott remains staring in dismay in the direction of the balcony as the audience howls with laughter. Then he turns toward stage left and begins to walk dejectedly toward the wings. Throwing an arm up behind his head as if to imply, "That's it," he waves a dispirited farewell without ever looking back and mumbles, "Goodnight!" as he continues on his way. But soon enough he returns to center stage and promises, "No more questions!" before he once again stares in the direction of the responder with a mock-confrontational smirk on his face. Uttering a slow triplet of a chuckle that sounds a great deal like a challenge countered, he affirms, "That's correct!" with more than a hint of sarcasm. Then he points up toward the balcony again and begins to resoundingly proclaim, "Either you are closing your eyes to a situation you do not wish to acknowledge..."

And just that quickly, Scott transforms into the very essence of con man, *Harold Hill*. His performance big, broad, and utterly assured as befits the flamboyant sharpster he portrays, Scott struts, poses, and hustles his way through a seamless, smooth-as-glass rendition of 'Trouble.' He moves all over the stage and at times even ventures onto the left and right stage extensions that reach out along the side walls of Harman Hall. By the time he sings the line, "...but a race where they set down right on the horse," he has moved to the left, front corner of the stage. In synch with the lyrics, he steps forward on one leg and throws his other leg over the back of an imaginary mount beneath him. Maintaining a wide-legged stance, he holds his hands close together in front of his body with a firm grip on make-believe reins and begins to post lightly as he continues to sing. Finished evoking the musical figure of a horserace, he raises his downstage leg over the back of his steed and neatly dismounts. As Scott ratchets up the intensity of the song, he sings out the word, "Friends!" with a great deal of power and authority. Immediately, musical director, Brad Ellis, breaks in with the distinctive five note beginning to the overture for *West Side Story*. Scott responds with a firm rejection of that musical allusion, drawing out the word, "Nooooo..." Then he reaches out an arm toward the balcony and the erstwhile heckler and refers to that show's standing in the Tony Award competition by calling out the comically flat, jeering word, "Loser!" before he returns to the final verse of 'Trouble.' By the time Scott hits and holds the resounding tenor note that ends the number, "... Pool!" the audience is all but ready to order band instruments and uniforms and sign up for music lessons.

Next Scott performs a medley of brief samples from songs and jingles that typify pop culture in 1957 - the year that saw the premieres of both *Music Man* and *West Side Story*. With tongue planted firmly in his cheek, he intersperses TV themes with hit songs, starting off with '77 Sunset Strip' and inviting the audience to join him in the signature finger snaps. Soon he moves on to the Perry Como hit 'Round and Round.' Scott sings the phrase, "round, round, round," in a marvelous way that somehow creates the auditory image of a circle, as he both elongates the vowel sounds and makes the consonants ring. When he sings 'Love Is a Many Splendored Thing,' he makes



use of flamboyant glissandos between one note and another, investing the song with all the melodrama of the movie from which it came. And just how Scott could possibly perform a flawless imitation of both the gravel-voiced, R & B sound of Fats Domino in *'Blueberry Hill'* and the geeky, gawky, rockabilly style of Buddy Holly in *'Peggy Sue'* isn't entirely clear. But Scott absolutely nails both impressions, and the audience responds with enthusiasm. Moving into the decade of the '60s now, Scott sings a phrase from *'Sound of Silence'* in a beautifully pure and delicate tone. But suddenly, he launches into a stentorian recital of Kirk's famous voice-over from *Star Trek* to raucous applause and laughter from the audience. Then before Scott ever speaks the word, "*Enterprise*," he interrupts the dramatic voice-over with a warning to "*book early on Priceline.com*." As he utters the words from the current day ad, he places his hand alongside his face and looks behind him as if the interruption had come from some unknown quarter. While the laughter increases, he turns in a rather confused circle as though he has lost his way, but then faces the front again and repeats the question from his opening monologue, "*Who Knew?*" Scott's spot-on comedic timing assures that the laughter turns riotous.

As the laughter fades, the pure, exalted strains of a recorded excerpt of Menotti's *Amahl and the Night Visitors* drift out over the hall. Scott listens intently for a moment, and then relates how at thirteen years of age he "*gingerly stepped onto the stage*" in the role of *Amahl* for his musical theatre debut. Looking back, he allows that this performance at the First Presbyterian Church of Kirkwood, Missouri, under the direction of Ron Jenkins, was the true beginning of his career. At the Friday evening performance, Scott speaks directly to Mr. Jenkins, who was in the audience, and thanks him sincerely, adding with genuine warmth, "*I owe you a lot.*" However, Scott now leaves the scene of the church musical and transfers the audience to a much more secular vignette: that same thirteen-year-old boy, rehearsing with his rock band in the basement of his home, "*Because before there were garage bands, we were in the basement!*" Holding an imaginary hand mic in both hands and bringing it close to his mouth, Scott breaks into a dynamic cover of *'Light My Fire.'* Much to the delight of the audience, he gives his performance plenty of attitude and just the right touch of defiant, rock 'n' roll raunch. Tossing his head back, he wails out the high, split-syllable final note, "*Fi-ah,*" as he greatly amplifies his volume, but nonetheless keeps his tone pitch perfect. Then with hardly a pause for breath, he recounts that for reasons unknown to him, this really was one of his Mother's favorite songs.

Next Scott moves on to the "*overly ambitious*" high school history class project that had him portraying the "*skinniest, most Presbyterian Tevye ever.*" Despite his mock-dramatic tone for this introduction that clearly pokes fun at his own performance, Scott briefly sketches a *Tevye* that is worthy of Zero Mostel himself. In an authentically accented dialect, he sings a few phrases from *'If I Were a Rich Man.'* As he sings, he elevates his flexed arms, keeping his hands and forearms at right angles to his upper arms, and performs an agile shimmy with only his shoulders and upper torso in the manner of Ashkenazi Jewish dance. But he quickly interrupts his song with a mournful, minor key chant that ridicules his portrayal,

saying, "*Oh boy! Such a goy- goyum!*" His self-mocking chant aside, Scott gets a big hand from the audience, after which he makes the improbable quip, "*I didn't realize so many of you had seen that show.*"

At this point, Scott revisits his last church musical and announces the title with proper fanfare, "*Godspell!*" Now he literally appears transfigured. Wisdom, fervor, and spiritual light seem to emanate from him, and he virtually *becomes* the visionary, young Preacher who upbraids the Pharisees for laying a heavy yoke upon the "*People.*" His voice full, authoritative, and ringing with faultless clarity, Scott performs *'Alas for You'* with youthful vigor, genuine passion, and a sense of urgency, as if he really were pleading with intransigent "*hypocrites*" to reform. Finally in a series of four strongly resonant tones that ascend high into the musical scale, he sings, "*Alas, alas, alas for you,*" and sustains the last tenor note. Then, his voice breaking with entreaty and frustration, he cries out fervently, "*Blind fools!*" The effect of Scott's deeply felt performance was so awe-inspiring that the audience seemed to take in a deep breath before breaking into enthusiastic applause. Almost as remarkable was a "*tale out of school*" that Scott revealed on Friday night, with Mr. Jenkins seated in the audience, about their church production of this play. Scott acknowledged that the score was not available at the time and so they had no sheet music for this song. But they got the recording, and Scott "*figured it out.*" It is amazing that someone so young was capable of transcribing melody and accompaniment for such a complicated piece of music. The story makes one marvel anew at the extent of Scott's musical ability and training.

After reporting that he starred in *Godspell* twice more before he left St. Louis, Scott discloses that he received an offer to star in a national tour of that show, subsequent to one of those performances at a small college in nearby Hillsboro. He also describes how he had to get permission from his parents to withdraw from his University studies in order to take the tour. His tone laced with irony, he says that his parents reluctantly gave their permission, only so that "*I would get it out of my system.*" But then Scott continues with a note of laughter in his voice, that a couple of weeks after he left school "*the tour went up in smoke.*" The result of all this, Scott relates, was that the dinner table in the Bakula household became "*really quiet*" for "*a couple of months.*" However Scott goes on to say that in the interim he got the chance to perform in another role at that same Jefferson College, and calls the part "*a remarkable one*" for a 21-year-old to play. Adding that he has gotten a chance to play "*dribs and drabs*" of that role since then, he confides, "*it haunts me to this day.*"

With that revealing remark, Scott begins his medley of songs from *Man of La Mancha*, opening with the character *Cervantes'* spoken introduction for *'I, Don Quixote.'* "*Come, enter into my imagination and see him!*" he invites, in a captivating voice. As Scott enacts this description of the character, he dresses himself in a cape, gauntlets, and Don Quixote's battered helmet, all of which rest atop the onstage piano. The cape was meant to be pre-tied so that Scott merely had to slip it over his head. However on Thursday night, that detail was obviously overlooked. So to buy himself time to

complete his costume, Scott starts the line, “*He conceives the strangest project ever imagined...*” but then improvises, “... *how to tie a cape,*” in a tone that confers an air of sham scrutability on the feat. As the audience laughs with him, Scott follows the ad lib with a wily, theatrical, triple-chuckle before resuming the spoken introduction. But Murphy’s Law seems to be in full force this night, because Scott also has trouble donning the stiff gloves. And so when he delivers the line, “...*but a dauntless knight,*” he interrupts himself once more and utters a soft but audibly uncomfortable, “*Ouch! Oh, that finger!*” then continues in a confidential aside, “*You can’t be dauntless with a finger out.*” The audience laughs even louder and at this point may well have been expecting a comedy sketch to follow.



But if comedy truly were uppermost in the audience’s mind, Scott soon disabuses them of that idea. He performs ‘*I, Don Quixote*’ in a rich, dramatic, and dynamic, classical baritone, calling up all his considerable power to achieve an electrifying interpretation of the piece. When he sings of “*banners all bravely unfurled,*” he creates a sound picture of *unfurling* with his supple voice, sustaining the tone on “*all*” then gliding upward in a series of three distinct but effortless, improvised notes that rise

ever higher to the next tone in the melody on “*bravely.*” On a different night, he achieves a visual effect of the same concept by lifting his arm and using his hand to faintly sketch three circles that climb ever higher into the air as he sings “*unfurled.*” Scott completes the first song in the medley, singing with dynamic valor, “*Onward to glory I go!*” He now moves on to ‘*Dulcinea,*’ and his voice grows softer, lighter, and more lyrical. As if his character’s throat is constricted by the intensity of his worship for this ideal lady, Scott sings the first verse in a hushed but fervent tone with no more accompaniment than that of a two-note trill on the piano. Not until the second verse does the piano pick up the score. Now turning and stretching out his arm toward the figure of a dark-haired woman behind him, Scott sings, “*If I reach out to thee,*” with intense longing clear in his voice yet an air of helplessness somehow implied in his bearing. The woman, dressed as a peasant, sits silent and motionless on the floor of the stage with her back to both Scott and the audience. [Although we never saw her face, many fans hoped that it was Chelsea Field who portrayed this enigmatic character. We would later learn that the shadowy figure on stage was indeed Scott’s life partner.] As Scott brings this hymn to *Dulcinea* to a close, he sings of his beloved’s glory, and his voice gains robust strength once more, ringing out with his character’s courtly rapture and hopeless devotion. Then Scott begins ‘*The*

*Impossible Dream,*’ and his bearing undergoes a subtle but startling alteration. He somehow gives the impression of having grown frail, bent, and broken; his voice at times sounds enervated and faltering. But as Scott continues the song, he clearly marshals all of his character’s remaining courage and stamina and sings the final phrase, “*the unreachable star,*” with a soaring crescendo and exhilarating power. His chin upraised, he sustains the last compelling note and looks skyward, lifting his arm high in the air as if to reach out toward that star. When he finally releases the note, he closes his upraised, open hand into a fist, and at the same moment the follow spot winks out, leaving his figure in darkness. The astounded audience responds with prolonged and eager applause, cheers, and whistles for this superb performance.

When the applause fades, Scott once more picks up the story of his experiences. He says that he had been home for a year and had saved \$750, which he confides was not a lot of money even in 1976. Once again, he has the audience laughing at the absurdity when he reveals that one of the odd jobs he held during that period was counseling people on how to save money. But he continues that he took his nest egg and got on a plane to New York City, “*a place where many of my friends thought I had no business going to.*” Scott now begins a medley of three Stephen Sondheim songs that cleverly address his decision to relocate to New York and pursue a career in musical theatre. He sails into an animated performance of ‘*Everybody Says Don’t,*’ bringing all of *J. Bowden Hapgood’s* invigorating optimism to the number, as if in response to his naysayer friends. When he sings the phrase, “*Tilt at the windmill,*” he lifts *Don Quixote’s* old helmet from its resting place on the piano and holds it up almost reverently to connect with those words. However, Scott sings only about a third of this lively melody that he performed so memorably at Carnegie Hall, before he moves on to another song. After a scant two measure interlude of repeated chords, he continues at once with ‘*Into the Woods.*’ Holding onto the side of the piano for support, he gives an anxious, stammering interpretation of this song that may have reflected his own conflicted feelings about moving to the big city. At last he leaves the security of the piano and moves to center stage, singing with a great deal more energy and confidence: “*The way is clear/ The light is good/ I have no fear/ Nor no one should.*” Now after just another two-measure interlude of quick arpeggios, he embarks on the rapid-paced ‘*Another Hundred People.*’ The song’s fast tempo and Scott’s spirited, bustling performance conjure up a picture of the hectic pace of life in New York City. Even though the rapid-fire lyrics jostle against the quick tempo, Scott’s diction is so impeccable that the audience understands his every word and can visualize the pictures he paints of this “...*city of strangers.*” Ending the medley on an unresolved tone, he sings, “*I’ll call you in the morning or my service will explain.*” Then he breaks off singing to ask the whimsical question, “*Does anybody still have a service?*” as the piano plays a sharp, staccato, consonant chord in conclusion.

Without further preliminaries, Scott now announces that seven years later he made his Broadway musical debut. “...*Just another overnight sensation,*” he mocks in a deeply mellifluous tone that pretends to be self-important. He goes on

to point out the attributes of this show that afforded him his debut, repeating and exploding the consonants of the adjective “Big” each time to describe the *production, orchestra, theater,* and *ballad* he sang. With a verbal flourish, he proclaims his role and the name of the show, “*Joe DiMaggio, in Marilyn: An American Fable,*” and then begins to sing ‘*I’ll Send You Roses.*’ His voice soft, tender and loving, he imbues his performance with all the romantic devotion that the lyrics imply. Gradually, he intensifies both the volume and emotion in his voice to match his character’s vow of undying love and gallant protection for *Marilyn*. At the climax of the song, the intensity of Scott’s voice grows unimaginably soft and gentle once more as he almost whispers, “*I’ll send you roses/ I’ll send you roses...*” Then scarcely pausing for breath, he draws out his wry comment, but impassively reveals, “*Aaand the song was cut before we opened.*” The audience’s laughter only grows louder when he adds in that same, flat tone, “*Aaand the show closed in two weeks.*” Despite the disappointments, Scott warmly maintains that he made the most of his first Broadway experience and wouldn’t have traded it for anything.

“*Happily,*” Scott continues in a much brighter tone, an off-Broadway show that had called him prior to ‘*Marilyn,*’ but that he had turned down because he was “*...going to Broadway,*” called him back. He informs the audience that the name of the show was *3 Guys Naked From the Waist Down,* but hastily reassures them, “*We weren’t!*” and holds up both hands with palms turned outward as if defending his own propriety. All the same he relates, “*When the marquee for the show went up in the West Village in 1984, the neighbors made a lot of phone calls.*” Amid the ensuing laughter, he speaks again of that second phone call from the show, and says that they asked him, “*Are you ready now?*” With gleeful enthusiasm he declares, “*Oh boy, was I ever!*” Without further preamble, he picks up a hand microphone and instantly makes another amazing transformation, becoming the irreverent, impulsive *Ted Klausterman*. The MC’s deep voice - exceedingly smooth, suave, and almost unctuous - reverberates through the sound system as he welcomes everyone to the “*Komedy Klub East,*” and performs a portion of the character’s monologue from the original play. At one point *Ted/Scott* informs the audience that neither time nor space really exist, then adds with a bit of apprehension that matter itself can’t exist without space and time. Feigning shock at his own words, he studies the front and back of one hand as a look of growing horror comes over his face. He pauses a brief moment, then cries out in a pretense of acute alarm, “*Oh my god, we’re not here!*” Once again, the audience reacts with animated laughter. Continuing the monologue, the MC strolls across the front of the stage with one hand casually stuffed into a pocket and says that he was born in a small town. “*Peat Moss, Ohio,*” he declares in an easygoing, chatty tone, “*The fertilizer capital of America.*” Then he stops walking, looks out at his audience and softly attests, “*No shit!*” As he utters the quip, the look on his face is so completely sincere and innocent, his voice is so gentle and innocuous that no one could take offense. Of course the audience cannot help but greet his joke with good-natured laughter.

Now Scott brings the monologue to an end and confides in that deep, dulcet MC voice, “*Hey, life is tough when you’re a deep guy.*” He waits a beat and then breaks into ‘*The Promise of Greatness,*’ mixing into his performance just the right touch of *Ted’s* cynicism and self-serving avoidance with his hyperkinetic energy. To illustrate the lyrics, Scott raises his arm high in the air and looks up at the ladder he sings about or crouches down with two hands grasping either side of an imaginary steering wheel. But in each case, he refuses these means to probable success. As his face clouds over, his eyes narrow with indecision, distaste, and something akin to anxiety, he very nearly whines, “*I don’t think I wanna climb!*” or “*...drive!*” Still he reassures his listeners, “*I’m a helluva guy!*” Near the end of the number, he sings, “*They gave me a mirror. I looked at my face,*” and grasps the handle of an imaginary hand mirror, moving it alternately close to and away from his face as though trying to bring it into focus. Still peering rather doubtfully into the ‘mirror,’ he cocks his head to one side and pretends to study his own profile. But he seems to come to an unwelcome conclusion from the evidence he sees there, for he now sings at full volume, “*Ain’t life a bitch?*” and repeats that phrase twice more with a carefree lilt. He then breezes into a tag ending of *scat* lyrics and visually punctuates the syncopated beat by rocking his upper body and flexed arm forward several times, then rebounding each time with an agile, fluid rhythm to bring the song to a lively close.

Scott now retrieves a wooden stool from stage left, carries it to center stage and sits down. He looks loose and casual as he stretches out one long leg and rests his foot on the floor, while he bends his other knee and hooks that heel over the rung of the stool. Talking about his move from New York to Los Angeles in 1986, he relates that he went west to do a new show that was, “*conceived, written, directed, etc., by Dennis Deal.*” Scott identifies the show, “*Nite Club Confidential,*” and describes it as a hit that ran for a year and as a result, afforded him several television guest spots. But when he recounts the next milestone in his career, he marvels that he had to go all the way to LA to get his hit Broadway show. “*Back in 1988,*” he says, “*during the writer’s strike...*” Here he pauses for the inevitable laughter that follows, because *WGA* writers were once again out on strike at the very time of these benefit performances. Scott wonders aloud if this coincidence represents, “*Karma...or...kismet,*” before he warmly announces the title of the show, “*Romance / Romance!*” Still seated on the stool and holding the hand mic, Scott begins to sing ‘*Words He Doesn’t Say.*’ Soft, evocative, and full of longing, his voice gently caresses the lyric. The beautiful natural *vibrato* in his tone echoes subtly, effortlessly as he sustains the notes at the end of phrases. He sings the words, “*...hungers for your touch,*” at the peak of a crescendo of volume and emotion that embodies his character’s ardent desire. Finally, his tone grows tender and muted again as he sings the last two crystal clear, high notes, “*... to you,*” holding them softly—hauntingly—as he slowly lowers the mic to his lap and the spotlight on his face goes dark.

When the ovation for this poignant ballad fades, Scott walks back to the piano and refers to *Romance / Romance* with conspicuous pride in his voice. “*Five Tony nominations,*” he

almost gloats. His tone grows only a bit more diffident as he adds, "...including one for best actor in a musical." A few scattered shouts of approval resound from the audience but Scott makes a supposedly furtive hand signal – one that everyone can readily see – to indicate he wants the applause to increase. Along with their laughter at his antics, the audience obliges him with an enthusiastic hand. Scott thanks them earnestly, but then feigns amazement and remarks, "I'm always so surprised when that happens." However he soon returns to the subject of the Tony awards. With sham reluctance, that at times halts the flow of his words, Scott confides that he isn't a bitter person. Then referring to the 1988 Tony-award-winning actor, he protests that he never understood what was so great about a guy wearing a cape and half a white mask on his face, "...who could hold a note for a reeeeeeally long time." Scott's comically blasé, mocking attitude as he stretches out the word "really" brings on more laughter and another smattering of applause. So he inquires, "Are you applauding that idea or that you love Michael Crawford or..." and the congenial laughter only increases again. Reflecting that it was actually a good thing he didn't win the Tony award for *Romance / Romance* since he might well have missed the audition for *Quantum Leap*. Scott then says that the nomination put him into a category. But he quickly interrupts himself and amends in his naturally unassuming way, "...well, it put me *next* to a category" of illustrious Broadway leading men. To those stars of the Broadway stage, he now dedicates the next medley as a "small tribute."

The medley begins with a too-short sampling of Sondheim's beautiful 'Pretty Women.' Scott renders the song in a classical style, his pronunciation cultured and crisp. But far from the lush, romantic tone in which we might expect him to sing such impassioned lyrics, a vague darkness and faintly brittle melancholy invade his style that clearly evoke the character he now portrays. This little morsel of Scott's *Sweeney Todd* undeniably leaves the audience wanting more. But they will have to wait for another time (hopefully) for that unabridged performance, for Scott goes right on to the next song in the medley. In striking contrast, he sings 'Hey There' in a style that couldn't be more dissimilar from that of the previous song. His articulation, now distinctly informal and vernacular, seamlessly matches the working class setting of the show from which this number originates. As he sings, he strolls over to the stool that still waits near center stage, props one foot on its top, and leans casually on his knee. To complement the phrase, "Better forget her," he flings his bent arm forward insistently in that familiar gesture of indifference, while his tone grows distinctly sharp and emphatic. When he sings, "...dancing on a string," he sketches just the barest outline of a dance step with easy grace, while extending both arms out to the sides as if to achieve balance on that "string." He sings the last verse with thrilling power, accentuating the consonants on the word, "brother," and sustaining the tone so that it glides unbroken into the phrase that follows. All too soon it seems, he finishes his marvelous version of this song, then immediately segues into the next selection without so much as a noticeable pause for breath. "Damn! Damn! Damn! Damn!" he exclaims with measured but agitated vehemence as he moves the stool to far stage left and leans over it heavily in obvious frustration. "I've

grown accustomed to her face," he grumbles, forcing the words through clenched teeth before he pushes himself upright and turns to face the audience. The piano plays a short introduction, and Scott continues this song from *My Fair Lady*, reverting again to more polished diction and summoning *Henry Higgins'* decidedly ambivalent vexation. But after only a few measures, he moves on to 'How to Handle a Woman.' Accompanied only by a guitar, he begins the song from *Camelot* in a purposely regal manner, projecting with great power, using elaborate arm gestures, roundly rolling his R's, and giving "answer" the exaggerated pronunciation, "ahnsah." But as he brings the song to a close, he crosses to stage right, leans back against the proscenium, and allows his voice to grow whisper soft and pensive. "Simply love her. Love her. Love her," he repeats, making a contemplative, almost imperceptible nod of agreement before he sings the last exquisitely tender phrase.

Now the piano plays a short bridge to the next song in the medley. And as if by Merlin's own magic, a cane appears in Scott's upstage hand. He stands upright, positions the cane pointedly in front of him, and declares in a didactic tone, "It's a well-known fact..." Suddenly, a song and dance man takes possession of the person on stage. Pompously singing of a man's supposed capacity to grow more attractive with age, Scott tosses the cane from hand to hand and glides rhythmically across the stage as if he were on skates. He sings the phrase, "Unfortunate? Maybe," and at the same time tucks the cane jauntily under his downstage arm. Then he strikes a lofty pose by cocking his downstage hip and extending the opposite muscular leg, as he slips the fingers of his free hand into his front pocket and shrugs a careless shoulder. At another point, he sings, "...and the girls react," as he takes a wide-legged stance on both feet and leans gently on the cane beside him. In the brief musical rest that follows, he pushes his weight off the cane, does an effortless half turn on one leg, and lands facing the back of the stage, where he turns his head over his shoulder and pauses to give the audience a brief,



beguiling glance. After this, Scott brings off some genuine tap dancing in his soft-soled shoes: *brush-heel-toe-heels* moving forward; a first-rate *buck-and-wing*; a *side-shuffle break*; *ball changes* moving backward with the cane held horizontally in front of him. He actually proves to be quite a convincing hooper, but draws laughter from the audience all the same for the comically smug, self-mocking expression he affects while he dances. The tap routine over, he takes up the song again and repeats with dazzling power, "Men of forty go to town! Women go..." then concludes the phrase by uttering, "...to pot," in a clearly counterfeit stage whisper. The outrageously

painful grimace he assumes at the same moment renders his soft-voiced insult all the more condescending and laughable. He then reprises the first verse and once more performs the same fluid, gliding figure that complemented it earlier. Nearing the end of the song now, he repeats, "...and the girls react." At the same time he leans ever so lightly on the cane at his side and props his free hand akimbo on his hip, then casually crosses one foot over the other and rests just the toes of that foot on the floor beside its mate. Somehow he manages to look elegant, carefree, and arrogant all at the same time. Retaining this debonair pose, he lifts one shoulder independently, then drops it just as he elevates the opposite shoulder and quickly alternates sides several times to fill another musical rest. Finally he sings the closing line at full intensity, "It's a well-known fact!" holding the last powerful note as he flings one hand high in the air, raises his chin to a preposterously high, haughty angle, and ends the number with an arrogant flourish. After this captivating little tour de force, the audience does indeed react with boisterous approval. When the applause begins to fade, Scott reveals that the number he just performed was originated by "Robert Preston from *I Do! I Do!*" On Thursday evening, he explains that he is adding this little tidbit of information, "Since you don't have programs." Actually, the bad weather throughout that day had delayed delivery of the programs, which did not arrive from the printer in time for the curtain. This lack of programs would actually play a part in another funny moment in the show that occurred later that night, but more on that when we come to the second act.

Continuing in his genial, familiar tone, Scott asks the audience to agree that he could not do a show like this one without performing "...a little Rodgers and Hammerstein, right?" That remark draws a round of applause, and Scott concurs by adding enthusiastically that Rodgers and Hammerstein are, "all over The American Songbook." So he announces with a note of resolve in his voice that he intends to sing some of their music, "...without further ado." Turning his back to the audience, he walks upstage toward the band and puts away the cane that he still holds in his hand from the last number. He waits a moment to let the anticipation grow, then orders in a deep, throaty growl, "Hit it!" Improbably, the drummer begins to lay down the heavy 'boom-boom-chiihh' of a rap beat. As the introduction continues and a bass guitar line joins the drums, Scott picks up a music stand that waits near the piano and carries it down stage. Placing the stand down, he retrieves a pair of blue-tinted, octagonal granny-glasses, pauses with due solemnity, and then makes a dramatic gesture of putting them on. He adjusts the angle of the stand, looks out at his audience, and utterly reinvents himself again - this time turning into the quintessential beat-poet. No esteemed literary light ever began a reading with more gravitas than Scott displays as he begins this 'song.'

Over the thumping house beat, the synthesizer, now disguised as a compelling brass section, plays the first phrase of 'Climb Every Mountain.' Scott takes a step back, raises both arms like a priest presiding at liturgical rites, and begins to recite the verse in a voice that grows deep and weighty with import. Delivering the lyrics in a strongly rhythmic cadence, he draws

out the sound of some words and accelerates others markedly to reflect differences in mood or meaning and to perfectly synchronize with the beat behind him. Although he does not sing, musicality and rhythm seem to flow through his upraised arms - indeed through his entire body. Narrating the chorus as if it were an injunction laid down by a spiritual teacher, he exhorts the faithful to "Climb every mountain. Ford every stream," as he launches an insistent, upraised hand toward his disciples with each command. Then he continues, "Follow every rainbow ..." while he describes a graceful ascending arc with the same hand and tracks the sweep of that hand with his rapt gaze. Scott now proceeds to a second stanza, this time of alternative lyrics that were originated by a Canadian group for a humorous 1995 CD. The ironic poetry stresses a theme of karmic self-realization. But while Scott gives a delightfully playful interpretation of these verses, he also fully commits to conveying the literal meaning of the words and underscores their significance with the deep, rumbling intensity of his voice. The stanza concludes as he echoes the original chorus once more. But this time when he ends the phrase on the word "dream," he makes a graceful interweaving motion with his raised hands, and then forcefully separates them with palms facing outward, like a magician performing some sleight-of-hand that sternly commands the sharp break in the music and drum beat that ensues.



A strongly percussive, musical interlude follows in which Scott performs a sequence of slow, contemplative movements. Gliding fluidly from side to side, he stretches out and circles his long arms in the precise but fluid style of a *T'ai Chi* form. In an electric pause between two sections of this interlude, he perches on one leg and raises the other flexed knee up toward his mid-section, while he spreads his arms widely to either side, wrists raised and fingers arching toward the floor like a stalking bird. Perfectly balanced and utterly motionless, he sustains this classic *Phoenix Pose* for a moment of pure theater, while the drummer strikes the ride cymbal to highlight the display. At the close of this brief martial arts interval, Scott stands with legs separated, one foot slightly in front of the other. His arms curve elegantly at his sides to frame his waist.



His hands, neutral and relaxed, mirror that gentle curve with open, yielding fingers and palms facing upward. In this formalized stance he recites another verse of humorous lyrics, his voice ironically growing deeper and reverberating with yet more severity as he recites. Maintaining that graceful, curving placement of his arms and hands, he begins to shift his weight back and forth on separated feet, faintly rocking his lower torso to and fro to intensify the cadence of his rhyme and to underscore the urgency of his message: “*What you wish, what you want, what you can, what you know/ Climb every mountain; see the valley below!*”

As Scott ends this third verse, he takes several steps back from the podium and recites, “*No time to stop and sip from the stream/ Or follow every rainbow ‘til they find their dream.*” At the same time, a choral group of young women files onto the stage and flanks Scott on either side, singing the original bridge of the song. With the group’s entrance, the band abandons the heavy rap beat they played for Scott’s satirical ‘reading’ and returns to Richard Rodgers’ flowing, expressive melody. When the ensemble reprises the chorus, Scott turns to face them and reaches out both of his arms to the singers. Once more his entire body seems to become a conduit for the slow, graceful tempo of the music. Gently bobbing to the rhythm, he dances to his right with springy steps and describes expansive circles with his upraised forearms. Then he stretches out both arms to their limit and alternates waving each one up and down in big see-saw movements that rebound with the beat of the music. When the sections sing in tandem, he extends an arm and points a commanding finger toward the first group to signal them. Then he repeats the gesture with his other arm to indicate the second group and mimes the lyrics explicitly in that direction to elicit their response. Mirroring the elegant flow of the music, he sweeps his forearm and upturned, open hand back and forth in broad, undulating arcs that carry his upper body along with the momentum. Now he moves to his left with rhythmic, gliding side-steps, leading each time with his left foot and an outstretched left arm that circles back toward his body before stretching out again. As he returns to center stage, he takes a lunging step to the right, then leans far over in that direction and sways rhythmically from side to side, extending his arms with open, imploring hands to first one section of singers and then the other. All the while, Scott clearly relishes moving in time to the broad, fluid rhythms and seems transported by the beautiful vocal harmonies. It took a moment for me to realize that he was *also* conducting the ensemble, directing those clear young voices with every ounce of enthusiasm in his being. As the group approaches the finale of the song and the melody begins its persistent ascent, he encourages the choir with a rousing command, “*Come on!*” urging them to give him more volume, more energy, more emotion – to let their voices soar. And the young singers do exactly that as this brilliant, inventive version of the Broadway classic comes to an inspiring end.

Shouting over applause for the previous number and speaking with infectious excitement, Scott now introduces the *Female Ensemble of the Duke Ellington School of the Arts* and ensemble leader, Angela Powell Walker, who joins him on stage. As the audience greets Scott’s introduction with even

louder applause, he welcomes the tall, striking Ms. Powell Walker to the stage by warmly grasping both of her shoulders in a brief embrace before he disappears behind the choir. The ensemble now sings a lovely and delicate version of ‘*Somewhere Over the Rainbow*,’ the youth and simplicity of the singers adding immensely to the beauty and impact of their song. When the ovation for the ensemble’s performance has nearly faded, Scott, who is now seated behind the piano at the back of the stage, begins to play the familiar chords that precede John Lennon’s ‘*Imagine*.’ Accompanying himself on the piano while the choir provides richly harmonized backup vocals, he performs his unforgettable version of this song that stirs such poignant memories of *Quantum Leap*. He begins the first verse quietly and taps into something within himself that gives a serene, sensitive, innocent quality to his singing tone – one that echoes the mood of the ensemble’s just finished ballad. But gradually increasing the power and resonance of his voice, Scott invests Lennon’s lyrics with his own heartfelt conviction and profound emotion. With the choir adding their voices in unison, he sings the phrase, “*Imagine all the people living life in peace,*” and his voice ascends to a clear, true, all but angelic, high note on the word “*peace*.” Then Scott takes up the solo melody again, singing in a quiet, thoughtful tone, “*Imagine no possessions,*” and the ensemble echoes strongly in three-part harmony, “*No!*” On a subtle note of challenge, he continues, “*I wonder if you can?*” and they respond with even more energy, “*Yes, I can!*” His voice imposing and strong now, he intones, “*The brotherhood of man,*” and they amplify with just as much vigor, “*Brothers and sisters.*” Their united voices swell to an exhilarating crescendo as Scott and the ensemble once more sing in unison, “*Imagine all the people sharing all the world.*” With no decrease in that impressive power and energy, he sings the refrain, “*You may say I’m a dreamer,*” and, “*I hope some day you’ll join us,*” voicing with utmost clarity each tone of the triple embellishment notes that enhance the middle and end of each phrase. Then he returns to the softer volume and contemplative mood with which he began the song. As the chorus sings a slow repeat of the word “*imagine*” to conclude Scott’s purposely unfinished lines, he improvises, “*Can you imagine?*” then stresses, “*I hope that you can...*” ultimately imploring, “*Please, please, everyone...*” After the chorus repeats “*imagine*” for the last time, he plays a final, resolving chord on the piano and they close the piece with a soft, multi-part, “*Ooooh.*” An amazed and delighted audience greets this finale to Act One with prolonged and energetic applause. Without hesitation, Scott graciously shares the ovation that resounds through the hall with the choir, offering an appreciative and congratulatory, upraised hand to each member as she passes him and exits the stage.

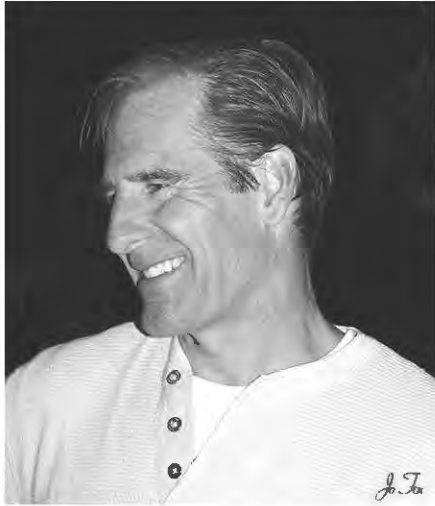
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“**Reminiscences**” of Act II and the complete song list, including songwriters and shows in which each song premiered, will appear in the next issue of *The Observer*.

## DANCING IN THE DARK AT THE OLD GLOBE THEATRE

By Jo Fox

The years 2006, 2007, and 2008 have been very active ones for Scott Bakula and mark a serious return to his roots – theatre. His latest endeavor is the retelling of the Fred Astaire/Cyd Charisse movie, *The Band Wagon*. The movie, however, left viewers with an incomplete story that *Dancing in the Dark* finishes with a satisfying flair. If the play goes to Broadway as everyone hopes, what theatre-goers see may be very different from the Old Globe Theatre presentation. As Scott told me, the play would need a lot of work and some shortening for the Broadway stage.



Is *Dancing in the Dark* headed for NY and Broadway? According to one of the docents, two successful Broadway producers were in the audience for the Wednesday night performance that I saw. They were taking a serious look at the play with that thought in mind.

In *Dancing in the Dark*, Scott plays the lead, Tony Hunter. The play revolves around Tony, a down-on-his-luck Hollywood actor. Jeffrey Cordova (Patrick Page), a Don Quixote-type Shakespearian actor, decides he wants to direct a musical and hires Lester and Lily Marton (Adam Heller and Beth Leavel), two Tony-winning musical theatre writers, to conceive his new play. Tony almost walks out at the beginning when he learns of the Martons' involvement. Tony and Lily have a past. Tony left Lily to seek fame and fortune in Hollywood but Lily hasn't gotten over Tony, creating some interesting moments later in the play. Jeffrey manages to bring both the Martons and Tony reluctantly into the fold, reminding them that personal conflict doesn't matter. They are family—there for the better good. (“That’s Entertainment!”)

One by one, the other actors of the musical are brought on board. There is Paul Byrd (Sebastian La Cause), a modern dance choreographer, whom Lester describes as Martha

Graham without the laughs. There’s Paul’s love interest, Gabrielle Gerard (Mara Davi), an untested ingénue. When Paul signs on, he brings along his school of dancers (the ensemble). The last member of this project is Hal Meadows (Benjamin Howes), Jeffrey’s right hand man and his left, according to Lily.

*Dancing in the Dark* has two primary settings – on various theatre stages, and behind the scenes of those theatres. As if in flashback, Lester, Lily and Tony try out a rollicking number called “Triplets” at a Greenwich Village nightclub. They enter from stage right, sitting on rolling chairs with bonnets on their heads and cloth bassinets surrounding the chairs. The number is vaudevillian. Each triplet wants to do away with the others so they would be the only one. There is a break in the number in which Tony, Lester and Lily are “offstage” (actually the side apron.) While a man in a monkey costume performs, the three chat. Lily pulls out a cigarette from her stash in the bassinette and lights up, as they wait for their cue to go back on and finish their number “onstage.”

Later on at Jeffrey’s apartment, everyone finally meets for the first time. Lily and Lester pitch the new play called *The Band Wagon*. It’s the story about a shoeshine man who has been sending home money to his girl from his best customers’ large tips, but all the while telling her he is a big success. The girl decides to visit the shoeshine man and now he’s in a predicament. One of his rich clients decides to help the shoeshine man in the charade and by the time the play ends, everyone admits they are not really from old money, but come from the Bronx, Schenectady, and other not-so-glamorous places instead. During the pitch, Lester bangs away on the piano as he and Lily belt out the songs. Lily hopes the ingénue can sing the romantic ballad. When Gaby joins in, her lovely voice surprises them all.

Tony loves the pitch, but Paul wants exciting and avant-garde dance numbers, so he doesn’t like it. Jeffrey sees the play as a musical *Faust*. This, Paul likes and immediately jumps on Jeffrey’s idea. By the time *The Band Wagon* opens, Tony is a priest, Jeffrey is the Devil, and the dance Paul choreographs is a torrid love-ballet that has Lily’s eyeballs popping out of her head. Tony rants that he’s quitting, but no one hears his remark. By the time he is done, Tony has insulted everyone on the stage and winds up “By Myself.”

Gaby, meantime, finds she is still enamored with Tony. She’s been a fan of his for a long time. When she first meets Tony, Paul even teases her about the scrapbook she has of Tony. In her dressing room, Gaby sings the love ballad the Martons wrote, “Something You Never Had Before.” At Sardi’s, she plays the “what if” game and convinces Tony give the show another try.



Tony tells the cast that he will come back only if they return to the Martons' original pitch. Everyone except Paul is in favor of this but it's a bit late. Jeffrey tells the company, after the Faust version sets fire to one stage, that the producers have quit, "taking both sets of books" with them, and they are out of money. Tony decides to sell the only remnant of his heyday, his Degas paintings, in order to get enough money to continue the show. Jeffrey concedes he is out of his element and agrees to stay on if Tony will direct. They see a "New Sun in the Sky."

Running notes after a performance, it becomes apparent to both Tony and the cast that Paul's love-ballet doesn't fit. Yet Paul claims to be a team player, telling Tony to give him notes on what he doesn't like and that the changes will be made. Notes end and everyone scatters, leaving just Paul and Gaby onstage. With Tony out of sight, Paul rips up the notes, ignoring them all. He then calls a journalist he knows, telling the man that *The Band Wagon* is in trouble except for the ballet. Gaby is stunned. She tries to persuade Paul to really be a team player, that the cast has worked so hard on the play and they deserve a chance. Paul kisses Gaby and tells her he liked her better when she didn't talk. He walks off, leaving Gaby in a state of limbo.

As the play goes through one more performance, Gaby works up the courage to tell Tony about Paul. When Tony confronts Paul about pulling the ballet, Paul quits although the others try to convince him to stay. Paul tries to take the dancers and Gaby with him. Teddy (Jacob ben Widmar), one of the dancers, has been elevated to Tony's assistant, and for the first time in his life, takes the initiative, telling Paul he's staying loyal to Tony because he promised. He sits back down and the rest of the dancers follow his lead. Paul accuses Gaby of loving Tony. She replies she doesn't love Tony because she doesn't know him well enough. But she knows she doesn't love HIM and that she wants something more out of a relationship. Paul is the only one to leave.

Act II begins with an onstage production number at the Colonial Theatre in Boston called "Louisiana Hayride," which is part of *The Band Wagon*. In Connecticut, they try out "Rhode Island Is Famous for You" at the Shubert Theatre.



Photo by Craig Schwartz

Mara Davi and Scott in "Rhode Island Is Famous for You"

This is followed by Tony and Jeffrey onstage in blue silk pajamas singing "I Guess I'll Have to Change My Plan," who are later joined by Gaby, also in blue. Most of the second act is *The Band Wagon* presentation at the Shubert. The finale of the production, "A Shine on Your Shoes," has the entire cast (except Paul) singing and dancing to ovations from the Shubert audience.

Tony, after firing Paul, tells the Martons he needs the ballad they promised him. This song finally shows up at the end as the Martons pitch the play's title song, "Dancing in the Dark." Tony and Gaby kiss for the first time as Tony choreographs the beautiful melody.

Fast forward several decades.

A new cast is rehearsing *The Band Wagon* and the stage director brings in a guest to meet the cast – Tony Hunter. They are excited and thrilled to be meeting someone from the original production who can answer questions about the show and the original cast. Tony says that everyone else from the original is gone now. Tony reminisces about his long life with Gaby. When asked why the Martons never wrote another musical for him, he explains that Lily was the heart of the duo and she got sick not long after writing *The Band Wagon*. Lester passed eight years ago. They asked who Jeffrey Cordova was. Tony replies that Jeffrey was very big in those days. He names a couple of plays, but this new company never heard of them. Finally he mentions that Jeffrey was Uncle Anselmo on *Bewitched*, and everyone goes ahhhhhhhhhhhh.

One member of this new cast questions Tony about a song that should be included but has no lyrics. The notes in the libretto just say "song." Tony remembers that they made up the words back stage just before going on. He recites the words to "That's Entertainment!" but they are different from the lyrics sung in the first Act.

The company fades out as Tony's memories kick in. All the people from the original production return to the stage to sing "That's Entertainment!" including Paul, who now tap dances with the rest. Tony is young once again and the "original" cast reprises the song along with the rest of the company as *Dancing in the Dark* comes to an end.

The first night I saw the show was Talkback Tuesday. Each night, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, played to almost packed houses. There were just a scattering of empty seats.

During Talkback, the cast was asked what changes were made and we were told that the opening of the first act was completely reworked and 20 minutes dropped the day before opening night! After weeks of rehearsals, muscles had learned the roles and it was hard to break that mold. Nicholas Dromard (he played Philippe) said he would jump up, ready to go on, then realize that no, he shouldn't go on now, that was the scene that was dropped. Learning new dialog and movements just before opening was exhausting. Everyone felt it, but they all agreed it was worth it because the opening act played so much better with the new rewrite. Patrick Page lost much of his accent when he spoke to the audience after the play. Mara Davi (who played Gaby) was almost unrecognizable without the ingénue wig. (Her name is pronounced Mah-ra).

Nicholas spoke fluent French so the writers decided to add that to his character, making Philippe a non-English-speaking dancer. Benjamin Howes (who played Hal Meadows) told us he was “backstage” during one number, watching the cast perform, but since he was understudy for the role of Jeffrey Cordova, he was practicing the steps while Patrick Page was performing them. Director Gary Griffin liked it so much he kept Benjamin’s practicing in the show.

For Scott, I counted 16 costume changes that I remember and I’m sure there must be a couple I’ve forgotten. After one of the shows, Scott told me he did the actual whistling in the “Shine on Your Shoes” number.

As for the play, I thoroughly enjoyed it. The plot was cohesive and easy to follow. Since the play was from Tony’s POV, Scott was on stage most of the play, even when he wasn’t active in a scene such as “The Pitch,” which was just Lily and Lester.

When I asked Scott if he was going to Broadway with the show, he said the cast had to be asked. He also said there was a lot of work ahead. The show had to be shortened (I think he said by about half an hour), the book had to be reworked, the show tightened (and scenes dropped) but it sounded very positive that Broadway was definitely the goal.

### Songs from The Old Globe’s *Dancing in the Dark*

#### ACT I

That’s Entertainment  
 Triplets  
 The Pitch  
 Got a Bran’ New Suit  
 By Myself  
 Something You Never Had Before  
 You and the Night and the Music  
 I Love Louisa  
 New Sun in the Sky

#### ACT II

Louisiana Hayride  
 Something to Remember You By  
 Rhode Island Is Famous for You  
 I Guess I’ll Have to Change My Plan  
 Sweet Music  
 Something You Never Had Before (reprise)  
 A Shine on Your Shoes  
 Dancing in the Dark  
 That’s Entertainment (reprise)



Photo by Craig Schwartz

The Ensemble, Patrick Page, Mara & Scott in “Louisiana Hayride”

### Lyrics to “That’s Entertainment” by Howard Dietz

(with music composed by Arthur Schwartz)

Everything that happens in life  
 Can happen in a show  
 You can make ‘em laugh  
 You can make ‘em cry  
 Anything  
 Anything can go....

The clown with his pants falling down  
 Or the dance that’s a dream of romance  
 Or the scene where the villain is mean  
 That’s entertainment!

The lights on the lady in tights  
 Or the bride with the guy on the side  
 Or the ball where she gives him her all  
 That’s entertainment!

The plot and the hot simply teeming with sex  
 A gay divorcee who is after her ex  
 It could be Oedipus Rex  
 Where a chap kills his father  
 And causes a lot of bother

The clerk who is thrown out of work  
 By the boss who is thrown for a loss  
 By the skirt who is doing him dirt  
 The world is a stage,  
 The stage is a world of entertainment.  
 That’s entertainment!

The doubt while the jury is out  
 Or the thrill when they’re reading the will  
 Or the chase for the man with the face  
 That’s entertainment!

The dame who is known as the flame  
 Of the king of an underworld ring  
 He’s an ape  
 Who won’t let her escape  
 That’s entertainment!

It might be a fight like you see on the screen  
 A swain getting slain for the love of a queen  
 Some great Shakespearean scene  
 Where a ghost and a prince meet  
 And everyone ends in mincemeat.

The gag may be waving the flag  
 That began with a mystical hand  
 Hip hooray!  
 The American way  
 The world is a stage,  
 The stage is a world of entertainment

**Ed note:** This song is definitely a rousing number whenever it is performed. Fans will recall it was the finale for the “Tillie’s Truck Stop MGM Medley” in *Men, Movies and Carol*. Except there in that final verse Scott sings: “That began with a Mister Cohan.” Watch it again, and you’ll recognize two other songs from this show: “I Think I’ll Have to Change My Plan” and “Dancing in the Dark.”

## ROADMAP TO STARDOM

### SCOTT BAKULA'S THEATRE CAREER - PART 4

By Sharon Major

**CORRECTION** to Issue 35, p. 22, 3<sup>rd</sup> paragraph: During his first two seasons of *Murphy Brown*, Scott appeared in twelve episodes,...and managed to find time to appear back onstage, not just once, but three times.

The distinction here is that Scott made two more stage appearances before his final *Murphy Brown* episode aired on Feb 5, 1996. By the fall of 1995 filming for *The Invaders* had wrapped and the promotional tour for *Lord of Illusions* was winding down. Only through a brief mention in an op-ed piece in the *Daily Variety*, were fans aware of Scott's performance at the following event.

### Isn't It Romantic?

#### A Celebration of the Lyrics of Lorenz Hart

Before the names Rodgers and Hammerstein became synonymous with hit Broadway musicals in the mid-twentieth century, it was the writing team of Rodgers and Hart that was making audiences stand up and applaud.

As a tribute to lyricist Lorenz Hart and a celebration of the centennial of his birth, the Mark Taper Forum in Los Angeles presented *Isn't It Romantic?* on Monday, October 2, 1995. It was "standing room only" as the tiny 750-seat Taper filled both house and stage with celebrities and illustrious performers.<sup>1</sup> The evening's program, loosely based on a pair of very successful staged concerts on Broadway in 1988 starring Michael Feinstein, paid tribute to Lorenz "Larry" Hart and his lyric legacy.

Lorenz Hart was born in New York City on May 2, 1895. His educational background included Columbia Grammar School and Columbia School of Journalism. During his undergraduate days at Columbia University, he (and classmate Oscar Hammerstein II) became acquainted with a much-younger Richard Rodgers, who was already writing songs for charity benefits and varsity shows. A professional collaboration, which lasted more than two decades, began in 1919 with a single song in the Broadway musical *A Lonely Romeo*; Hart was 24 and Rodgers only 17. Between 1920 and 1930 they wrote an astonishing array of musical comedy revues for Broadway and London's West End. At one point they were averaging four new shows a year, including the 1928 hit *A Connecticut Yankee*. In 1930 the pair went to Hollywood and in a few short years had written for nine films, a venue that furnished them with their only "pop" song, "Blue Moon."

Upon returning to New York in 1935, Rodgers and Hart worked together exclusively, writing more Broadway hits including *On Your Toes*, *Babes in Arms*, and *Pal Joey*. Then early in 1943, perhaps due to Hart's ailing health, Rodgers collaborated with old pal Oscar Hammerstein II on *Oklahoma!* By the fall of 1943, with Hart still in poor health, he and Rodgers revised *A Connecticut Yankee* to include several new songs. The show opened on Broadway on November 17, only days before Hart died of pneumonia.

The Taper is the smallest theater in the Los Angeles Theater Center Group (TCG) complex and is best known for plays. But the intimacy of the theater is well-suited to this now-annual event, called A Salon at the Taper, in which proceeds help to underwrite the numerous ticket-discount programs for all the TCG presentations. This evening's program was directed by Gordon Hunt and co-written/produced by Susan Clines and Michael Feinstein. The staging was simple. In most cases guest soloists were accompanied by either Stan Freeman or music director, Brad Ellis, on a single grand piano. Stage and screen icon, June Havoc, nearly 82 at the time, performed a fan-dance, singing "That Terrific Rainbow" (with the lyric 'I'm a Red Hot Mama') from the hit Rodgers and Hart Broadway musical *Pal Joey*, her first Broadway show back in 1940. Richard Rodgers' daughter, Mary Rodgers, renowned composer, dramatist and screenwriter in her own right (*Once Upon a Mattress*, *Freaky Friday*), reminisced about Hart and her father.

Scott performed "The Lady Is a Tramp," a song introduced on Broadway in 1937 in *Babes in Arms*, but omitted from the screen version. It was only much later—when sung by Frank Sinatra in the film version of *Pal Joey*—that the song became firmly cemented in America's musical lexicon.

In attendance were Hart's sister-in-law, Dorothy Hart, and her son Larry. Afterward, the very entertaining and informative evening was brought to a close with a party in the Pavilion.

Those of us not privileged to attend were finally treated to Scott's rendition of "The Lady Is a Tramp" at the recent *An Evening with Scott Bakula* in Washington, D.C., once again accompanied by Brad Ellis on piano.

### The Importance of Being Wilde

For one night only, on November 11, 1995, two performances of *The Importance of Being Wilde* were given at the 400-seat Forum Theatre in Thousand Oaks, California. The one-act two-man production starred Malcolm McDowell as Oscar Wilde and Scott Bakula as Interlocutor (a variety of roles adjunct to McDowell's Wilde), and was directed by Jack Temchin. The proceeds benefited the new Arts Center building for Ojai's Oak Grove School, where both McDowell's and Bakula's children were enrolled.

*The Importance of Being Wilde* is based upon the three trials of Oscar Wilde held in his native Britain in early 1895. Adapted by Helen Graves and Susan Jonas from H. Montgomery Hyde's account of the trials, the dramatic reading shifts from courtroom to private conversations, and includes quotes from Wilde's letters, plays and other writings. These productions, first produced at the Manhattan Theatre Club in NYC earlier in the year starring McDowell and directed by Temchin, mark the centennial anniversary of the trials.

The stage setting was sparse. A table, sitting on a rug in the center of the stage, held water glasses, a pitcher, and two

stovepipe top hats. Flanking the table were music stands with the scripts and stools for the actors. Both men wore contemporary gray/black, dressy/casual attire.

McDowell captivated the audience with Wilde's sarcastic and witty remarks, generating an appreciation for Wilde's popularity as a famous author and playwright. As Interlocutor, Scott narrated and took on various supporting players as the drama unfolded, affecting several English accents to delineate the characters. Near the beginning, each donned a hat and read from Wilde's immensely-popular play *The Importance of Being Earnest*. With the first trial, in which Wilde is the plaintiff, Scott portrayed Edward Carson, a rising barrister who trades witty barbs with Wilde. Later Scott assumed the personae of Frank Harris, Wilde's confidant and friend, begging Wilde to skip his bail and flee, fearing an assured conviction. In the end Scott portrayed Wilde's admonishing judge, who sentences Wilde to two years hard labor.

The trials of Oscar Wilde illustrate the legal repercussions of homophobia and the attempt at literary censorship during England's Victorian era. McDowell remarked, "It's a very important subject.... (M)ixed in with the seriousness is this incredible language of Oscar Wilde. It's brilliant language, and very funny, and very sad."<sup>2</sup>



Photo credit: Unknown

Each performance lasted a little over an hour, with a champagne reception following the second performance. Both Scott and Malcolm signed programs and had their pictures taken with fans.

Scott at the reception for *The Importance of Being Wilde*

## The Hollywood Bowl on Broadway

Coming straight from her starring role in Broadway's *Moon Over Buffalo*, Carol Burnett was asked to guest-star in a weekend at the Hollywood Bowl. She immediately asked Scott to appear with her.<sup>3</sup> Although deeply involved with his production company, Bakula Productions, Inc. (BPI) and his projects *Mr. & Mrs. Smith* and *The Bachelor's Baby*, Scott accepted the invitation. Thus on Friday and Saturday, July 26/27, 1996, both made their debut at the Bowl as they joined the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by John Mauceri, for an evening of music under the stars called simply, *The Hollywood Bowl on Broadway*.

Having grown up in the "neighborhood" of the Bowl, this offer held quite a bit of nostalgia for Carol. She chose her solo songs, all of which have special meaning for her, from a wide variety of twentieth-century musicals. Carol's opening number was "Adelaide's Lament" from *Guys and Dolls*; it had been the first song Burnett ever sang publicly. She sang "Little Girls" from her turn as Miss Hannigan in *Annie*; and a Sondheim favorite of hers, "I'm Still Here," a song she had previously performed in the concert version of *Follies*.

During the program, award-winning Mauceri and the 80-piece symphony orchestra performed several instrumentals that were recorded for his Phillips Classics CD, *Hollywood Bowl on Broadway*. These included Bernstein's symphonic pieces from *West Side Story*, as well as Richard Rodgers' "Slaughter on Tenth Avenue" and the overture to *Pal Joey*.

Then Carol, dressed in a red-sequin mini, once again took the stage and sang "Bewitched, Bothered, and Bewildered," an old Rodgers and Hart song from *Pal Joey*. As she explains, the song is about a mature woman who is hopelessly in love with a younger man. Heralding Scott's entrance, Carol says, "Speaking of an older woman who absolutely adores a younger man, I'm thrilled to introduce my buddy, Mr. Scott Bakula."



Wearing a white dinner jacket, black tie and trousers, Scott enters with a soft-shoe shuffle as the orchestra plays the intro to "One," from *A Chorus Line*. Carol fails to come in on cue and Scott vamps the intro several more times before asking, "Are you going to make me dance all night?" "I like watching," she candidly admits. Her

reverie finally over, Carol provocatively begins, "One singular sensation, every little step he takes," as Scott utters "step-brush, step-brush." The little ditty is all too brief. Carol sails into "Give Our Regards to Broadway," Scott counters with "Another Op'nin', Another Show," and they are off and running.

The songs were "selected, collected and arranged" by Ken and Mitzie Welch, Burnett's longtime collaborators and friends, who had written this showcase in the early '70s for Carol and Sammy Davis, Jr. Called "The History of Musical Comedy," the 12-minute medley begins with Carol wanting to do every Broadway show tune ever written. Undaunted, Scott says, "Okay," and at Mauceri's suggestion, they begin at 1900. Starting with George M. Cohan's "Yankee Doodle Dandy" the cornucopia of song continues chronologically up to the 1969 rock-musical, *Hair*. This duet—punctuated with deft choreography, gestures and asides—includes too many bits of songs to mention. Yet a few are worth noting, Scott's "Summertime" made the temperature rise appreciably, and when Carol sang "Shy" (from her Broadway debut, *Once Upon a Mattress*) in Scott's ear, contrary to the lyric, she placed her hand suggestively on Scott's hip. Another fan favorite was Scott singing and dancing "If I Were a Rich Man," summoning his high school performance of Tevye.

Rather than extending the saga with new material to cover 1970 to 1995, Carol claims she is worn out, and Scott reminds her that they "haven't even gotten to Andrew Lloyd Webber yet." She belts out "Don't Cry for Me Argentina." He cuts her off, and mischievously suggests, "If we leave now, we can beat the traffic."

The evening weather was warm and comfortable, with a few unexpected sprinkles the first night that forced the orchestra to move their chairs and stands inside the band shell. But the rain cloud passed quickly and the excellent acoustics provided the entire audience with wonderful, entertaining sound. I might add that those who were clever enough to arrive at the Bowl early on Friday morning were treated to the rehearsal and sound check for the evening's performance. Both Carol and Scott were casually dressed, and while waiting to run through their medley, greeted fans who had come to watch.

Scott and Carol at rehearsal on Friday morning



### Dry Spell for Stage

When Scott's new series, *Mr. and Mrs. Smith* debuted on September 20, 1996 it promised adventure, punctuated with global and romantic intrigue. Since the first episode began with Scott dancing with a floor polisher, then later had him gliding over the dance floor with co-star Maria Bello, it was a sure bet he was going to sing at some point during the series. After all, he had sung in each of his previous star turns—*Gung Ho*, *Eisenhower & Lutz*, and *Quantum Leap*. The series did not disappoint. Not only did Scott dance and sing, he also played piano. The disappointment—no, the heartbreak—was that CBS cancelled the series after airing only nine episodes.

Only the prospect of the long-awaited wide-screen release of *Cats Don't Dance* on March 26, 1997 and the co-release of the audio soundtrack could assuage the loss. The animated feature starred Scott as Danny the Cat and contained music by Randy Neumann. [Reviews in *The Observer* #16; stats in Issue #28]

Nearly four years would pass before Scott found another opportunity to appear onstage. During these years he was constantly involved in screen projects of all sorts, including *American Beauty*, *Mean Streak*, *Luminarias*, *Net Force*, and *Major League: Back to the Minors*. Yet these years were not without theater potential. In fact, summer seemed to be the most fertile time for rumors to surface.

In August 1997 there was a gossip item suggesting Scott might star in *The Scarlet Pimpernel* on Broadway in October.<sup>4</sup> The following year, Scott was at the top of the list to perform in the west coast debut of Sondheim's revue *Putting It Together*, starring Carol Burnett at the Taper.<sup>5</sup> And in June 1999, director Susan Stroman (*Broadway Babylon*) was said to be "lobbying for Scott" to star in her Broadway revival of *The Music Man*.<sup>6</sup> But as it turned out, Scott's next stage appearance would not be in any of these, nor any other musical, but rather in a straight play.

### Love Letters

The long-overdue occasion for theater work came in the form of a perfect vehicle, venue and cause on Saturday, June 12, 1999, as Scott and Chelsea Field performed A.R. Gurney's Pulitzer-nominated play, *Love Letters*, at the Alex Theatre in Glendale, California. The performance was held on behalf of the Arthur McCready Charitable Trust, established to help children with special medical and educational needs.

A.R. Gurney's two-act play is easily staged, and even when it was produced on Broadway, never required more than two actors and a simple set with two desks, each appointed for their respective characters. No costume change is required, and the actors need not memorize their parts, as they are essentially reading aloud from their life-long correspondence. In fact during both of the Off-Broadway and Broadway runs in the 1989-90 season, the pair of actors changed weekly. By calling upon a wide variety of actors from both theater and screen, audiences returned and the material remained fresh.

Chelsea, who grew up in Glendale, and her mother, Barbara Botfield, one of the directors for the McCready Trust, spent several years ardently promoting the charitable organization. The 1400-seat Alex Theatre is fairly large—surely big enough to accommodate the anticipated ticket sales—plus it has a courtyard suitable for an after-glow reception. And the choice of play, *Love Letters*, seemed ideal for a small, inexpensive fund-raising production. But "small" isn't necessarily simple and trouble-free.

The planning for the show began the previous fall. Scott had been familiar with the play since at least the early '90s when he had been approached by the Canon Theatre in Beverly Hills to perform the play for a week. (Over a period of several years, the Canon presented over 250 celebrities taking on the roles of Melissa and Andy for a week at a time, just as the original New York City run had done.) A week's worth of shows—six to eight—is not a compelling commitment, and Scott had been asked several times during the run; yet in his oft-used expression, the timing wasn't right. He did however get a chance to see it performed once—in a production that paired Carol Burnett and Charlton Heston.

From every aspect, it looked as if this play would be ideal. However, when the time came to secure permission, the rights had been locked up for a year in order to produce a television movie-of-the-week. (That movie, with teleplay by Gurney, aired April 12, 1999 on ABC and starred Laura Linney and Steven Weber; it included a full cast of supporting players, seen in flashback.)

Scott's friend, Joe Cacaci (screenwriter for *The Bachelor's Baby*), was originally set to direct. Since Cacaci knew Gurney personally, they were able to get performance rights, with the proviso that the show would not be openly publicized, meaning no radio or print ads. Eventually another friend, Mary Lou Belli, directed. Scott said she worked with him and Chelsea, reading it through and discussing the roles, for "maybe four rehearsals...it's the kind of piece that you don't want to over-rehearse."<sup>7</sup>



Scott went on to say that this was “the perfect kind of show for that kind of event.” They didn’t have to memorize any lines. Furthermore the stage direction calls for the pair to be sitting at desks for the duration of the play, meaning it would be a much easier performance for Chelsea who was eight months pregnant at the time. Scott remarked that Chelsea was both excited and nervous about appearing on stage, since she hadn’t done live theatre since high school. “She’s done sitcoms and movies, obviously, and sang, danced and performed in front of live audiences for years, but not (to) sit down and do a play in a theatre.” In spite of the straightforward material and the warm reception by fans, it was still a challenging evening for her physically. One of the attendees remarked, “(Chelsea) must have been exhausted, but she found a kind word and a genuine smile for everyone who went to speak with her.”<sup>8</sup>

Scott claims that the play “verges on being actor-proof. It’s emotional, it’s funny, and it’s got everything you want to get in a night at the theater.”<sup>7</sup> One of the author’s dictates is that the couple must sit facing the audience and not look at each other during the show, maintaining an invisible wall representing the distance between the two and the time between letters. Scott acknowledged that it was hard not to look over and watch Chelsea’s performance. “I wanted to always peek and see what she was doing, but wasn’t allowed.”

One line from the play turned into an inside joke and got a huge laugh and applause from the audience. As Melissa speaks about “number two” being an accurate term for her second pregnancy, Chelsea aptly pointed to her own very-pregnant belly which was hidden by the desk. Most people in the audience were well aware that this too was Chelsea’s second pregnancy. This was purely coincidental. They didn’t even suspect a pregnancy when they initially agreed, otherwise they might have declined or postponed. Consequently her mother, Barbara, was the designated standby in the event that Chelsea couldn’t appear.

In this evening’s incarnation, Chelsea portrayed Melissa Gardner and Scott portrayed Andrew Makepeace Ladd III. They entered. Scott seated Chelsea at her desk and then sat at his, and the play began. Melissa and Andy start by reading notes they had passed to each other in grade school, then they proceed chronologically with the letters they exchanged during college and later, as each marries and raises a family. Although not often together, they are indeed a couple, bound by memories, friendship and love, through all the funny and poignant moments life can bring. In Act II, the letters reveal how much Andy and Melissa have become inexorably drawn to each other, and eventually the letters examine the repercussions when the two overstep their marriage vows.

It was estimated that the theater was about half-full, with approximately 350 people remaining for the reception. Through donations, ticket, autographed programs and photo sales, the event raised \$14,000 for the Arthur McCready Charitable Trust. Many more fans donated even though they could not attend.<sup>9</sup>



Photo by Mark Jones

During the years prior to *Love Letters* theater companies throughout the country were making offers to Scott, including a theater company in Houston, Texas and the American Conservatory Theatre in San Francisco. The latter was interested in Scott for their fall 1999 production of Bertolt Brecht’s *The Threepenny Opera*, with music composed by Kurt Weill. There would have been no need for Scott to learn German, since the 1928 original had been translated for the American stage in 1933. A revival in NYC did especially well in the late ’50s, and gave rise to Bobby Darin’s biggest hit, “Mack the Knife,” in 1959.

Citing yet again that the timing wasn’t right, Scott nevertheless may have been intrigued by the material, which musically and dramatically was as innovative and imaginative as Sondheim’s *Sweeney Todd*. Weill’s music may have piqued Scott’s interest enough to accept Gordon Hunt’s invitation the following year for a return visit to the Salon at the Taper, which was honoring the centennial of Kurt Weill’s birth.

### **I’m a Stranger Here Myself: Kurt Weill and His Lyricists**

Sometimes along the road of life there are potholes. Such is no doubt the case in a planned appearance that just did not work out for Scott. On Monday, December 4, **2000**, Scott was scheduled to appear at the Mark Taper Forum’s annual benefit, “The Salon at the Taper.” As in previous years the event was directed by Gordon Hunt. Michael Feinstein, who had been prominent in developing the Salon at the Taper’s program over the years, hosted and co-wrote the evening’s fare with Isaiah Sheffer.

The ninth Salon at the Taper was a slight departure with tradition; previous salons had celebrated formative lyricists of musical theater. This year’s event honored the brilliant, German-born composer Kurt Weill on the centenary of his birth. Combining innate talent, a formal musical education, and an affinity for American music, Weill’s style melds opera, cabaret, jazz, rag-time and folk music into an avant-garde art form. Weimar Germany fostered artistic freedom of all sorts, fueling the young composer’s ambitions. At 28, Weill collaborated with Bertolt Brecht on the Berlin debut of *The Threepenny Opera*. With it, he not only found success, he married one of its stars, Lotte Lenya.

But governments change; so in 1933, the Weills fled Nazi Germany for Paris, and in 1935 Weill's work brought them to the United States. Owing to his talent and early success, he found a welcoming new home on Broadway. There he developed innovative librettos with many of the great lyricists of the time, including Alan Jay Lerner, Ira Gershwin, Ogden Nash, and Langston Hughes. Theatergoers were enamored. He next tried composing for film, but found the audiences less accepting of his opera-like scores, and he returned to Broadway. *Lost in the Stars*, "Weill's last Broadway piece was no less daring... (I)t challenged the Broadway institution and audience to a degree that would not be exceeded until the 1970s in the Sondheim-Prince collaborations."<sup>10</sup> Having become an American citizen, Weill worked on behalf of the war effort during the 1940s, as well as contributing to Jewish and Zionist pageants. One of his proudest accomplishments was his folk-opera *Down in the Valley* in 1948, used in schools and communities throughout the nation. He was working on a musical version of *Huck Finn* when he died of a heart attack in 1950, a mere month after he turned fifty.

Yes, Scott was slated to appear. A Playbill.com announcement from that time lists him among the performers and his official biography appears in the printed program. However his name is not on the separate insert citing the evening's songs and performers. But perhaps, it is just that bio that gives us a clue as to why he might not have appeared.

From our interview with Ray Bunch that month we learned that "CBS advanced the airdate [for *Papa's Angels*] by two weeks, virtually at the last moment, and it created a bit of havoc."<sup>11</sup> Since principal filming in Calgary, Alberta was only complete in mid-October and bearing in mind the Thanksgiving holiday, this left less than six weeks for post-production in order to meet the Sunday, December 3 airdate. "Havoc" is probably the most graceful way of expressing the stress everyone at BPI was under at the time. But this is purely speculation on my part. When asked recently if he remembered why he did not appear, Scott could not recall. With scarcely a recollection of the event—after all it was seven years ago—it seemed pointless to ask what song he might have been preparing.

With family life and an escalating screen career that included *Above Suspicion*, *In the Name of the People*, *The Trial of Old Drum*, *A Girl Thing*, and *Papa's Angels*, plus his involvement in the multiple facets of BPI, Scott must have considered it a luxury to appear onstage, even for only one night. That luxury came only a few months later, in support of a very good cause.

### You Gotta Have Friends

The talent in Los Angeles is formidable, but it cannot compare to the generosity of over two dozen veteran stage and screen performers who offered their time and skills for the benefit of the Hamilton Academy of Music, a magnet high school for the performing arts located in Los Angeles, California. In a single performance on Saturday, February 24, 2001, Scott and Chelsea made their first appearance on behalf of the Friends of Musical Theatre, in the school's 600-seat Norman J. Pattiz Concert Hall. Called *You Gotta Have Friends*, this was the first all-star benefit to support the group that helps to

underwrite the school's professional-caliber musical theater productions. The goal of the program is foster a training ground for students entering the performing arts, while offering youngsters from elementary and middle school (via free performances) the opportunity to enjoy one of America's oldest art forms.

The evening's program was indeed star-filled, many of whom—like Scott—were parents of students attending the school. The variety/revue format was divided into two acts, each with over a dozen song, comedy and dance numbers. It would be an enormous task to mention all of the thirty or so performers that night. (Eventually we hope to provide our readers with scans of actual programs on our sister website [www.bakulaonstage.com](http://www.bakulaonstage.com))

The production was conceived and produced by Ilene Graff, with musical direction by Ben Lanzarone, Graff's husband. Although their daughter would graduate that June, Graff and Lanzarone would be instrumental in making this an annual event. Technical direction came from Robert Read, the Technical Director for the Hamilton School. The band consisted of Lanzarone at the piano, Frank Abraham on bass and Danny Taylor on drums.

The evening opened with the formally-dressed performers entering the stage one by one as they were introduced, singing the 1973 Top-40 hit "(You Gotta Have) Friends," written by Buzzy Linhart and Mark "Moogy" Klingman. The evening's fare included vocalists performing a wide variety of numbers, from solo ballads to comical duets and ensemble arrangements, intermittently spiced up by elaborately choreographed dance routines.

Midway through Act I, Chelsea, Scott, and Frank Williams incorporated both song and dance into one number, "Steam Heat" from the 1954 hit musical *The Pajama Game*, by Richard Adler and Jerry Ross. The jazzy/swing-era number was choreographed by Helene Phillips (*Papa's Angels*).

One fan reported: "When the curtain parted, Scott, Chelsea and Frank were in silhouette and posed for a jazzy song and dance routine. The spotlights then revealed their bowler hats, black suits, black shoes and contrasting white socks....

I got psss-steam heat/ I got psss-steam heat/  
I got psss-steam heat/ But I need your love/  
To keep away the cold.

"I know I couldn't reproduce the neat tricks they did with those hats: tossing them in the air and catching them on their heads...The grin on Scott's face reminded me of his Gene Kelly impersonation in *Men, Movies & Carol*"<sup>12</sup>

Another account mentions: "At another point the men lunged onto the floor and rapidly slid on the sides of their hips and flanks very far downstage, almost to the apron. Meanwhile in the center of the stage, Chelsea extended her beautiful long legs into almost vertical high kicks...There was tremendous audience response for this show-stopping number."<sup>13</sup>

In the middle of Act II, Scott and Chelsea performed the comically-macabre duet "A Little Priest" from one of Scott's favorite musicals, Sondheim's *Sweeney Todd: The Demon*



*Barber of Fleet Street*. Sondheim based the musical on a tragic tale of events in London 200 years ago that has been retold in various stories and presentations ever since. The score is filled with opera-like solos and chorale ensemble narration. Featuring Todd and meat-pie-maker Mrs. Lovett, "A Little Priest" is "a list song and a comic tour de force"<sup>14</sup> that gives the musical a fiendishly gleeful first-act finale. In a televised interview in 1980, Sondheim noted that he was "careful in the score to differentiate between the lead characters, depicting Sweeney as obsessive, brooding and self-involved, while Mrs. Lovett is cheerful, practical and amoral."<sup>15</sup>

Dressed in period costume, Scott and Chelsea exemplified Sondheim's intention perfectly. Scott's makeup provided deep shadows under the eyes, giving his Todd a ghoulish appearance. And with her hair in ponytails, Chelsea as Mrs. Lovett looked fresh and perky in her printed shopkeeper's dress and pinafore—yet brandishing a rolling pin, she clearly meant business. Displaying her best cockney accent, she asks Todd what he intends to do with the body he has just slain. True to character, Scott's Todd is reserved and almost non-responsive. Yet once he "gets" Mrs. Lovett's ever-so-practical proposal to mitigate the situation, the two manage to wholeheartedly embrace the notion of creating what could be "the best pies in London." Todd rationalizes the plan:

The history of the world, my sweet/  
Is who gets eaten and who gets to eat.

Through exquisite wordplay, puns and rhymes, the pair debate which occupations would provide the most delectable meals.

Lovett: Lawyer's rather nice.  
Todd: If it's for a price.

And if rear admiral is too salty, perhaps they could try:

Shepherd's pie peppered/ With actual shepherd on top.  
"Chelsea punctuated the outrageous lyrics with marvelously shrill, coarse and rather manic laughter."<sup>12</sup> Both sang the song with such gusto and lyric clarity that the audience gobbled up every line. An especially hearty laugh came when Scott modified a lyric:

I'll come again when you/Have SCHRAIER on the menu/  
making a surprising reference to Richard Schraier, the creator of Hamilton's Musical Theatre Program.

During the evening's final number "a hush fell over the audience."<sup>11</sup> Scott joined 'nita Whitaker, Karen Culliver and Gerry McIntyre in a moving performance of "Somewhere," from Bernstein and Sondheim's *West Side Story*. "True to the spirit of both the song and the show from which it was taken, the quartet consisted of two culturally diverse couples."<sup>12</sup> The finale closed as the entire company gathered to sing the refrain and took their bows.

A separate informal reception followed as members of the audience congregated in the foyer of the school, across the courtyard from the concert hall. Tables were decorated with centerpieces and balloons, and there was plenty of finger food to alleviate hunger while attendees waited to meet the "stars." A three-piece band performed upbeat numbers. The area was a bit crowded and noisy, and although the time with Scott and Chelsea was limited (due to a babysitter situation), each fan was able to get a brief moment and photo.

Whatever the expectations may have been when this fundraiser was first proposed, I suspect the goal was surpassed in spades. Proceeds from the event enabled the group to purchase over \$20,000 worth of equipment for the concert hall.



Photo by Debbie Jones

Just weeks later, in mid-April, the announcement came that Scott would portray the next captain of the Starship Enterprise in the Star Trek franchise. UPN's *Enterprise* was set to debut in September. Starring in a series once again meant there would be little time for stage work. Nevertheless 2002 provided two more opportunities for fans to journey and see Scott perform live.

## You Gotta Have Friends 2

With the 2001 Hamilton event such a resounding success, the original creative team of Ilene Graff and Ben Lanzarone came on board the following year to lend their expertise to a sequel. On April 13, 2002, Scott and Chelsea also returned for the one-night-only performance of *You Gotta Have Friends 2*, presented at the Hamilton Academy of Music to benefit the Friends of Musical Theatre. Allyse Beasley and Ted Lange hosted, Paul Kreppel directed, and Michael Andreas and Ben Lanzarone served as Music Directors, the latter providing piano accompaniment for the five-piece band. Technical direction, lighting and scenic co-design was again provided by Robert Read, Technical Director for Hamilton Academy of Music.

"(You Gotta Have) Friends" once again opened the show, this time sung by a small chorus standing on risers beside the orchestra pit. "Then in no particular order, the whole company came out onto the stage as if they were bound for some appointment...Scott was juggling a gaggle of hatboxes and following a dazzling and haughty Chelsea, who wore a sensational orange satin pantsuit. Scott characterized the very picture of a rather harassed escort at the tail end of an overlong shopping trip. But he seemed to get sidetracked when he spied a lithe, leggy blonde dancer, Broadway dancer Sandahl Bergman, as she performed some sensual stretches downstage. Scott stopped beside her...(with) a suggestive look of pleasure. But when Chelsea turned...she put two fingers to her lips and mimed a quite annoyed and forceful whistle....Scott then obediently followed her offstage with an absolutely priceless attitude that looked a bit sheepish and yet mischievously jaunty at the same time. The company then dispersed, headed to their separate destinations."<sup>16</sup>

Since Scott had just wrapped up the first season of *Enterprise* nine days before, and with daughter Chelsy graduating in June, it was a very busy time for the whole family. Knowing his fans would be coming from as far away as Australia, Sweden, England and France, Scott offered to appear in some little vignettes between numbers, in addition to the one number he and Chelsea had been preparing, the comic duet “When the Kids Get Married” from *I Do! I Do!*

After the applause from the first number of the evening, in which Ron Dennis and Friends performed a rousing song-and-dance routine to “Gimme the Ball” from *A Chorus Line*, Scott emerged from the wings with a basketball, handed it off to Dennis, and exited. Once the stage was cleared, Scott returned to thank the audience for their support and to recognize the parents, teachers and administration. But he especially wanted to honor the dedication of the students, some of whom travel two hours by bus each day, all “because they share a passion and love for the arts. The arts in public education; what a concept!” Stressing that the evening’s talented performers come from every area of the performing arts, a mime enters, pulled by his “dog on a leash.” As Scott tried to dodge the “pair,” a little game of move/countermove ensued. Then they both stop, face-to-face, and as Scott looked dubiously at his foot, he held his pant leg and vigorously shook his foot. “Scott tossed a skeptical look at the man and his offending pet and remarked dryly, ‘Well, I’m glad we got that over with early!’” As the mime left the stage, Scott concluded the introductions for the evening.

Act II opened with another exciting song-and-dance number, “Favorite Son” from *Will Rogers’ Follies*. After their exit, Scott entered with a broom, whistling the same song. The mime and his “dog” reappeared, and Scott rapped the handle of the broom on the floor as a warning. After a brief reprise of the move/countermove routine, Scott relented, saying “Oh, what the heck. It’s a benefit.” “Turning in the opposite direction and starting to walk away, the mime broke his silence and echoed, ‘Ah, what the heck. It’s a benefit.’” Scott turned his head sharply toward the man and stared at him in open-mouthed astonishment.”

“When the Kids Get Married” was the penultimate number for the evening. Chelsea and Scott were both dressed in matching striped pajamas. Singing and dancing, the two anticipate all of the spare time they will have once they are no longer encumbered with parenting duties. Each has definite plans in mind; he to read Tolstoy, she to take a trip. The list continues, and each verse ends, “I hope they marry soon.” Finally each picks up a long-neglected musical instrument (he the saxophone, she the violin) to demonstrate their resolve. An extra laugh came after only a few bars when Scott asked that they begin again, but just a bit slower, so that he could keep up. The laughter ramped up even more, as Scott stopped and emphasized his point by saying, “Slo-wer, Dar-ling,” and demonstrating the preferred tempo with his foot.

For the reception after the show, fans were able to greet the evening’s performers in classrooms and the hallway of the school. Meeting Scott and Chelsea in a separate classroom encouraged fans to ask questions as a group. Owing to the popularity of *Enterprise*, there were plenty of questions and

many new fans—the classroom was filled to capacity. Scott revealed he had only begun to learn the saxophone prior to this performance, leaving no doubt that his rudimentary notes were authentic. Chelsea seemed to have more experience with the violin, perhaps she had played in school or she simply had more practice time beforehand.



Photo by Jo Fox

Keeping his cards close to his vest as he always does, Scott never breathed a word that a full performance of *I Do! I Do!* might be in the works. He was probably waiting for an offer of a theater to materialize before making any announcement. Still, during the reception that evening Chelsea revealed they had been discussing a full production for a while. In any case, fans had no inkling that this little “tryout” foreshadowed a full-fledged production only a few months later.

### **I Do! I Do! (St. Louis 2002)**

Despite the team of Tom Jones and Harvey Schmidt having had many musical theater hits (including the longest-running musical ever, *The Fantasticks*), their hit musical *I Do! I Do!*, from 1966, remains relatively unknown. Although a cast recording (now available on CD) became popular and individual songs from the show were often performed and recorded, there was never a film version of the musical to bring the story and songs to a new generation. And probably because it is a two-character piece, the show is rarely performed by local theater companies. Unlike *Love Letters*, which is presented with minimal preparation and staging, a production of *I Do! I Do!* necessitates sets and costumes, choreography and musical accompaniment, and above all two strong, multi-talented performers who must carry the entire show.

### **Origins**

The history of this musical actually begins with the three-act play, *The Fourposter*, by Jan de Hartog, which debuted October 24, 1951 on Broadway. Like the musical, it is strictly a two-character piece with basically a single set: a married couple’s bedroom with a large antique four-poster bed in the center. One of America’s most beloved acting couples, Jessica Tandy and Hume Cronyn, starred in the original Broadway production, and beginning in June 1952 they spent nearly a year with the national tour, while their replacements continued to charm New York audiences. The Broadway production closed in May 1953 with a total of 632 performances, having

won two Tony Awards, one for Best Play and one for its director, José Ferrer.

*The Fourposter* encompasses significant events during the thirty-five year marriage of Michael and Agnes, beginning with their wedding day in 1890. From the opening when Michael carries his bride over the threshold and onto the stage where a four-poster bed (with the “God is Love” pillow beneath the covers) sits center stage, and his “ho, ho, ho,” so that Agnes can smell his champagne breath, to the finale, where Michael and Agnes are packing and arguing over the whether the pillow should stay with the bed for the new couple, the scenes, situations and even the dialogue are nearly the same as those of the musical.



Photo by Alfredo Valente

With a “ho-ho-ho” Michael (Hume Cronyn) shows Agnes (Jessica Tandy) that he does have champagne on his breath.

A film version (*The Four Poster*) starring married-couple Rex Harrison and Lilli Palmer was released in October 1952. But like so many film adaptations, this one suffers from the pen of screenwriter Allan Scott, who changed the couple’s names to John and Abby, and created a somewhat unsettling conclusion. Nevertheless, it was nominated for both Golden Globe and Academy awards.

A few years later, a performance of Jan de Hartog’s original play was produced for television and broadcast on July 25, 1955 as part of NBC’s series *Producer’s Showcase*. Tandy and Cronyn reprised their roles, and Tandy garnered an Emmy nomination in 1956 for her work.

It would take another decade, but with such winning material to bank on, Tom Jones and Harvey Schmidt took Jan de Hartog’s two-character play and turned it into a musical.\* After tryouts in D.C., Boston, and Cincinnati,<sup>17</sup> and four preview performances in New York, *I Do! I Do!* opened on Broadway December 5, 1966, starring Mary Martin as Agnes and Robert Preston as Michael, and directed by Gower Champion. The production received nominations for seven Tony Awards and a number of NY Drama Critics Awards,

\* A failed attempt at a musical, *No Bed of Roses* by Martin Kalmanoff in 1963, never made it past the summer stock circuit.

with Robert Preston winning one of each. The show was a resounding success, closing on June 15, 1968 after 560 performances. An original cast album was recorded, and at least one song, “My Cup Runneth Over,” provided Ed Ames and Anita Bryant each with hit singles.

Jones and Schmidt made very few changes to de Hartog’s play. The song lyrics and dance interludes effectively reinforce the original premise. The wedding is still turn of the century, specifically 1898, the tone is for the most part comical, and the vignettes from the fifty-year marriage remain the same. These include the awkward wedding night, the birth of a child, the wife’s spending and the husband’s ego as he becomes famous, the misbehavior of a teenage son, the daughter’s marriage, and an empty nest. Even when the situations take a dramatic turn, as when each experiences an attraction to someone other than their spouse, the conflict is readily resolved. There has been only one significant revival in New York City, mounted off-Broadway in 1996 that ran only six weeks (68 performances); it appears to have followed the original musical faithfully.

### St. Louis, Missouri

In honor of Scott’s parents’ fiftieth wedding anniversary, he and Chelsea Field starred in *I Do! I Do!* on June 23 and 24, 2002 in Scott’s hometown of St. Louis, Missouri, at the 320-seat Terri M. Fischer Theatre on the Florissant Valley campus of St. Louis Community College.

Production assistance came from BPI, but without the vision and multiple talents of Dennis Deal, the production would have surely suffered. Essentially a third and equal component in the creation of Michael and Agnes’ characters, Deal not only directed, he was musical director and arranger, choreographer, set and lighting designer, and conductor for the eight-piece orchestra. Kathryn Morrison (*Mr. & Mrs. Smith*) chose the costumes, Vivian Baker (*Major League 3*; *Scott & Chelsea’s Love Letters* and *Netforce*) is credited with makeup, and Michael Moore (*Enterprise*) with hair—all of their designs being brought in from Paramount Studios in Los Angeles. In addition to the theater facilities, some sets and lighting were provided by the college’s Communications Department, with assistance from students, faculty and community members.

The production was a benefit for Our Little Haven, a community organization committed to aiding young children who are drug-affected, abused, neglected or impacted by HIV. Due to the overwhelming response of fans, the people of St. Louis and Our Little Haven supporters, tickets for both performances sold out quickly. Consequently, tickets for the dress rehearsal on Sunday afternoon were made available to the public. Through ticket sales and donations alone OLH received an estimated \$15,000, and through the generosity of Scott’s fans, the organization continues to receive contributions from all over the world.

As Dennis remarked [see p.27], the impetus to do this musical came from Scott and Chelsea’s vocal coaches, Lee and Sally Sweetland. But as Scott will attest, Deal literally “reconceived” the show for this production. Grounded in reality, the common everyday experiences of a married couple make the plot highly relatable from generation to generation. To demonstrate how timeless the situations are, Deal moved the wedding up fifty years, to the late ’40s. The opening scene

is the wedding, with Agnes dressed in a traditional bridal gown and Michael in Navy dress whites. (This was an homage to Scott's parents who were married while his father served in the Navy.) From there, Dennis Deal led us through the second half of the twentieth century with the costume choices. In Act I the two were dressed in '50's clothing and the children's toys were reminiscent of that period. Deal went on to explain that for evening attire, Agnes wore an "Oleg Cassini gown and a Jackie Kennedy wig," and as "(Agnes and Michael) open Act II, she's in an Afro, he in a '70's mustache and sideburns, both in paisley pajamas." Then for the daughter's wedding "she wore a Dorothy Hamill haircut and a polyester print suit with a short, above-the-knee skirt."<sup>18</sup> The final scene brought the couple into a present-day setting. Grey-haired, Michael sported an Ivy cap, with a tan poplin jacket over the plaid pants from an earlier scene; to me, the pants appeared worn and a bit baggier in the seat. (I'm still not certain if this was a costume change, or merely Scott's bearing that gave me this lasting impression.) Agnes seemed to have maintained her youthful attitude, wearing a long denim coat and a flowered hat.



Given the limited time, the orchestrations and choreography alone would have been a daunting task, but obviously not a problem for Deal. Here the eight-piece orchestra included a piano, a synthesizer, two reeds, two trumpets, a French horn, and percussion. The expansive score is evident at the beginning of the Overture. Like church bells pealing, the horns repeat a pair of chords with a measured tempo, heralding the wedding scene. The curtain opens, revealing a projection of a stained-glass church window above the four-poster bed sitting upstage center.

Although a description of the songs and plot was published in *Observer* #26, I would like to reiterate some of the lyrical highlights of the show.

Act I opens with the wedding numbers—a patter-song called "All the Dearly Beloved," a waltz-time duet called "Together Forever," and a joyful, eager "I Do! I Do!" Once in the bedroom, there is a short conversation before Agnes leaves to change clothes. A musical interlude (called "Michael Gets Undressed" in the libretto) follows, as Michael displays duress, indecision and finally undress, in a comical pantomime. Finally abed, the two alternately sing the lines of a sweet little lullaby ("Goodnight"):

Goodnight/ Goodnight./ I hope you sleep all right./  
I hope so, too./ Pleasant dreams./The same to you.

As Agnes falls asleep Michael rises, and in a dream-like sequence he giddily dances around the room singing "I Love

My Wife," a number with a bouncy backbeat. Slipping into a faux-German/Austrian accent at one point, he sings:

I've been to see a specialist/ But when he was through/  
He told me it's hopeless./ I'm stricken for life/  
"My son," he said:/ "Get back to bed!"/  
"You happen to love your wife."

As Michael goes back to sleep, the scene changes and Agnes, now very pregnant, enters from the wings and sings:

Something has happened./ Something old/  
But to me it is still so new/ For all at once/  
Instead of one/ I am two.

The following scene finds Michael in bed, evidently complaining of labor pains. He is acting like a petulant child, saying Agnes only cares about the baby. Although it is obvious that his behavior speaks differently, he insists he has kept himself in the background the entire time. Agnes however claims, if it weren't for him, she'd have been worried the whole eight months, adding dryly, "but I just didn't have time." Michael's voice softens: "Agnes, I believe you're teasing me." Warming to his affectionate tone, she begins to sing:

Sometimes in the morning/ When shadows are deep/  
I lie there beside you/ Just watching you sleep./  
And sometimes I whisper what I'm thinking of:/  
My cup runneth over/ With love.

The song ends as a duet. Despite all of this musical's delightful, memorable songs, "My Cup Runneth Over" is perhaps the only true standard to have come out of this show.

The following scene depicts the events surrounding the birth of the couple's first child. Called "The Waiting Room," Michael displays all the emotions of an archetypal first-time father, portrayed entirely in pantomime. Scott communicates so much with his expressions and body language that everyone in the small auditorium was delighted by his masterful rendering of Michael's anxiety. The orchestra delivers a fanfare followed by a triumphant march, and Michael's demeanor transforms into a proud father, singing:

A brand-new person suddenly was./ Who never used to be./  
He weighed six pounds/ And fourteen ounces/  
And we named him/ After Me!/ A son! A son! A son!

This song segues immediately into the duet "Love Isn't Everything." As the couple lyrically despairs of all the additional expenses, they move kiddy toys into the bedroom, and a clothesline strung with baby clothes appears high above the bed.



Photo by Friedman-Abeles

*Deal's* reconception in 2002 took a cue from the 1966 production (above w/Mary Martin, Robert Preston) and strung a clothesline from the flies to signify the arrival of children

Nevertheless, Agnes and Michael still think love makes marriage "sort of fun." There is an extended instrumental

interlude while the couple plays with the toys, including a delightful pretend cowboy-and-Indian shoot-out. As Michael plays on the floor, Agnes—pregnant once more—approaches and stands before him, and when he looks up, all he can muster is “Oh, no.” Agnes responds with the next verse about the arrival of “a girl.”

Fifteen years pass with a scene change, and the bedroom has now become appointed with much more fashionable and expensive accoutrements. Michael and Agnes are dressing for a formal dinner in honor of author Michael’s success. The duet “Nobody’s Perfect” provides constantly changing rhythms, as the couple reveals each other’s “annoying little habits.” In an effort to clear the air, they’ve decided to provide each other with “a little list”: Agnes begins by admonishing Michael, with an operatic flourish:

If you’re out of socks,/ Believe me when I say/  
That there’s bound to be/A more effective way/  
To get them washed/ Than to stand in your drawers/  
In the middle of the kitchen./ Screaming:/  
“Someone has stolen my socks.”

Then, in syncopated measures, Michael rails against Agnes’ overspending, and at another point, he provides a jaunty scenario, mimicking his wife’s last-minute routine:

It’s “Where are my gloves, my gloves, my gloves?”/  
And “Where is my purse, my purse, my purse?”/  
“Where are my keys?” – “Where is my hat?”/  
“Where is my this?” – “Where is my that?”

As the lists continue to grow, they realize that they both are human—not perfect. Resolving to do better, they leave for the evening and the stage darkens.

When the stage lights come up again, the two are returning from the banquet and once again bickering. It is evident that as Michael’s success has blossomed, so has his opinion of himself. The ensuing scene gives rise to two incredible showstoppers. Michael insists that it isn’t his fault that he is irresistible. Scott makes the most of the lyrics for “It’s a Well Known Fact” [performed recently in Washington, D.C.] by flaunting his physique and acumen for the audience.

Men of forty go to town,/ Women go to pot.

In justified retort to Michael’s condescending ego-inflated attitude, Chelsea sails into “Flaming Agnes,” showing off her expensive purchases and singing:

If I’m going to go to pot,/ This pot is gonna be HOT!/  
Agnes, at times both flirtatious and vulgar, dances on the bed in this jazzy bump-and-grind number. Chelsea performs this with such gusto, it is apparent why she calls this song “the most fun to sing.”<sup>19</sup>

Growing ever more distant as they argue, Michael reveals an interest in another woman who—unlike Agnes—“appreciates” him, setting off a spitfire first-act finale. Declaring “The Honeymoon Is Over” the pair nearly brawls. As Agnes packs her things—including the “God is Love” pillow—Michael decides she must leave the despicable item behind. The melody becomes more discordant and they separately reiterate the marriage is over; finally, he pins her arms behind her back and lies on top of her, effectively placing the pillow on the bed. The excitement and intimacy of the moment overcomes Michael’s resolve, and he begins gently singing a reprise of “I

Love My Wife” as Agnes continues with “The Honeymoon Is Over.” When Michael’s earnest plea finally registers, Agnes relents, singing “Well, nobody’s perfect.” A final embrace signals the end of Act I.

Act II opens with the couple celebrating New Year’s Eve at home. As they sing “Where Are the Snows?” the tender and poignant lyrics acknowledge the speed with which the years have passed. Midway, Michael asks the conductor to please play the middle part again, and extending his hand to Agnes, the two engage in a delightful dance interlude that includes some fancy dips and turns, albeit more sedate than earlier.

When their teenage son finally arrives home from his merry-making, Michael realizes that it won’t be long before the young man, and his sister, will be grown and no longer living in the house. Dryly, Agnes says, “I certainly hope not.” The two then perform “When the Kids Get Married,” the number that they first presented at the Hamilton benefit a few months earlier. During the saxophone/violin segment Michael once again asks Agnes to slow down and start again. Neither the original libretto nor original cast recording make mention of this little exchange, yet because it is so charming and seemingly spontaneous, it gets a laugh every time.

Once both kids have married, Agnes makes a dramatic decision. Confronted with an empty house and a husband who doesn’t seem to love her as he once had, she decides to leave him. With the ballad “What Is a Woman?” Agnes wonders:

Why is a woman afraid of/ Not being in love?

Michael recognizes her pronouncement might be based on the unwarranted attentions of a younger man. He persuades Agnes to hear him out, convincing her that he does indeed love and need her. The scene culminates in the duet, “Someone Needs Me.”

The closing scene depicts the couple packing up the last few articles in the room, as they prepare to move to a smaller place. In the duet “This House,” the couple declares:

Marriage is a very good thing/ Though it’s far from easy/  
It’s filled this house with life and love.

Scene for scene, word for word, the dialog and musical numbers were nearly identical to the original libretto. There was just one minor deletion. A very brief duet called “Roll up the Ribbons”—the penultimate song in the original—that accompanied a scene change. It’s possible however the melody may have been incorporated into an instrumental interlude.

Local announcements in the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* and the Internet fan-network provided enough publicity to sell out the small theater. Nevertheless Scott kept his scheduled appointment with the St. Louis’ Channel 5 morning show for a brief television interview on Monday, June 24. A few days later, a reviewer from St. Louis’ Washington University wrote: “(Scott) communicated Michael’s boyish charm, fecklessness, occasional arrogance, and eventual compassion with great clarity, charisma, and best of all, a sense of real joy. However, Chelsea truly stole the show... (In) “Flaming Agnes,” Chelsea was simply sexy, sensual and provocative...” The writer was also impressed by Dennis Deal’s “excellent orchestral accompaniment and spot-on direction.”<sup>20</sup>

(Scott’s theater career continues on p. 28)

## DENNIS DEAL TO THE RESCUE

During the bows at the end of Monday evening's performance in St. Louis, Scott and Chelsea thanked Dennis profusely. The heartfelt accolades were well-deserved, with Scott calling him "a man of many talents and an incredible human being."



The variety of hats Dennis Deal wore for *I Do! I Do!* cannot begin to demonstrate all of his incredible talents. Any minimal biography of Dennis surely includes his award-winning hit musical *Nite Club Confidential*, in which he contributed to nearly every facet of the show, from the libretto to producing the cast recording. And although he handles everything behind the scenes superbly, he also performs—singing bass with *The Accidentals*, an a cappella group that has been

recording together since 1995.

In January, Dennis graciously responded to my e-mails:

**Sharon:** What a spectacular production *An Evening with Scott Bakula* turned out to be. Of course Scott was (to quote my daughter) "phenomenal." I knew it would be amazing to see Scott perform and hear him sing whatever songs he chose to present. Yet to experience the whole production, from dress rehearsal to the final performance, was an astonishing gift to all of us. Since my comments are not nearly as eloquent as others from our group, with permission, I'm sharing a few of their remarks with you...

**Dennis:** Thank you so much for sending your (and others) comments. We worked so hard and long on this show and to have it so appreciated and cherished makes it all worthwhile. I felt so special when 'little old me' actually received flowers and such from "Fans of Scott Bakula" – I'm staring at the card propped up on my desk as I write. Thank you and everyone else who was in on such fun and folly!

**Sharon:** Scott told us that the unique arrangement for "Climb Every Mountain" was one you came across several years ago and had put in your files for future reference. Can you tell us more about the origin of the arrangement and the additional lyrics?

**Dennis:** It's from a CD: *The Hills Are Alive* by The Angstones, a Canadian band that spoofs the entire score of *The Sound of Music*. Each song is given a different comical/absurd twist. I thought the "rap" take on "Climb Every Mountain" was the funniest.

**Sharon:** There were a couple of references to *Quantum Leap* during the evening. The first came up during the dress rehearsal, and Scott laughingly admitted he was thrown off guard when it garnered such huge applause. Then during the song "Born Too Late," I recall a lyric about taking a 'Quantum Leap' that also generated a very vocal audience response. Was this another song you had tucked away for a while, or was it written specifically for this event? Did the *QL* lyric come from songwriter Mark Saltzman?

**Dennis:** "Born Too Late" was a bit of special material I encountered when I was doing some arrangements for a cabaret trio, "Hilly, Lilly & Lulu," who were cashing in on the '30s/'40s-nostalgia craze of the late '70s. (I don't know if M. Saltzman

wrote it for them or not.) I liked the song, got a copy and have used it a couple of times in the years hence. (FYI: Hilly in the group was Hillary Rollins, gorgeous daughter of Jack Rollins who's produced most if not all of Woody Allen's movies.) Anyway, it's a darling song, Scott and Chelsea did it smashingly, and yes, I wrote the *QL* tag lyric.

**Sharon:** In the same vein, can you tell us if the piece you wrote, "Dreaming of Mr. Porter," was something written a while back or for this event?

**Dennis:** I wrote "Dreaming of Mister Porter" for a show (a revue of Cole Porter songs) for Cheryl Bentyne, The Manhattan Transfer redhead.

**Sharon:** Do you have any idea how the female ensemble from the Duke Ellington School for the Arts came to be chosen to perform?

**Dennis:** Scott wanted a choir. Kristen Fox called around. The main DEHS choir was otherwise engaged, so we got the girls' ensemble, who were darling.

**Sharon:** As for the 2002 production of *I Do! I Do!*, I've wondered who may have originally suggested this show. Do you recall when Scott first approached you for this St. Louis benefit?

**Dennis:** I think Scott and Chelsea's vocal teachers suggested they do the show. No, I don't recall when they contacted me to get involved.

**Sharon:** As I understand it, the costumes were sent to St. Louis just in the nick of time, and the printed programs did not arrive as expected for the first performance. (*Déjà vu* for *An Evening with Scott Bakula* programs???) Do you have any recollections of other close calls or production snafus?

**Dennis:** The costumes were rented from Paramount and the hair and makeup was designed by Paramount personnel. The only thing that was screwed up was the programs. Everything else was perfectly planned and on schedule. I do remember that as if trying to put this all together in 10 days wasn't hectic enough, the Bakulas' dog nearly died, Scott stubbed his toe something awful and Chelsy the Younger (as I call her) was graduating from high school. Other than that...

**Sharon:** I assume that the musicians were local professionals, if union rules apply, unless they were affiliated with the college. As director, did you work with David Horstman, who is credited with conductor/pianist? Or was he on his own in working with the musicians until you came in for rehearsals? Plus, if I remember correctly, you served as conductor during the performances.

**Dennis:** David and the musicians (all Union) showed up the night before and we rehearsed. We rehearsed a little bit the next day before the invited dress (and still rehearsing as people were being seated as I remember). Anyway, David perfectly played the piano and I conducted. Until I was conducting I'd hadn't thought that I'd be conducting, but it just seemed like the sanest decision. Time was just too tight to tutor David into the tempos and cues. A true whirlwind it was!

**Sharon:** Finally, what you have been up to lately—personally and/or professionally?

**Dennis:** Right now, I'm trying to put a push on two musicals I've written (neither recently): *The Great City* and *The Ballad of June Cool*.

## The Philadelphia Chickens

While the “too-illogical zoological musical revue” called *The Philadelphia Chickens* was not an actual onstage appearance, Scott contributed his singing talent to one number in the official cast recording for this “completely imaginary stage spectacular.” The tongue-in-cheek hype might be a little over the top, yet it fittingly reflects the outlandish nature of Sandra Boynton’s animal characters. Designed to delight even the youngest listeners, Boynton conceived the idea, penned the lyrics (music by Michael Ford) and the illustrations, and eventually brought together over two dozen celebrated performers to personify and illuminate her cast of critters.

Patterned after an old-fashioned two-act Broadway production, the audio CD of this “musical revue” offers a wide variety of musical styles, from swing to the blues. Scott’s song is a simple little lullaby with a calypso beat called “Pig Island.”

It’s all about piggies who

Play on the beaches/ The color of peaches/

There by the turquoise sea...

The CD, which received a Grammy nomination, comes housed in a washable-cover book containing colorful drawings, full lyrics to help young readers, a section with the musical notes and lyrics to encourage budding musical talent, and even a page with dance steps to promote more interaction.

According to Boynton the recordings were done at her studio in Connecticut and in New York over the course of a year, and the release came at the end of 2002, just in time for holiday gifting. A portion of the performing artists’ royalties goes to aid the Cystic Fibrosis and Juvenile Diabetes Foundations. The CD and book combination is still available at amazon.com, where you can also hear samples of the songs, or purchase individual selections as MP3 downloads.

## The 26<sup>th</sup> Annual Kennedy Center Honors

At the end of each year since 1978, five distinguished individuals are presented with the nation’s highest award for lifetime achievement in the arts at the Kennedy Center Honors, in Washington, D.C. On Sunday, December 7, 2003 presenters, performers, invited guests and benefactors filled the 2,300-seat Opera House, second-largest of the theaters in the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts complex, as the year’s honorees—James Brown, Loretta Lynn, Mike Nichols, Itzak Perlman, and Carol Burnett—were treated to performances by their artist friends and peers.

The gala event, hosted by Caroline Kennedy Schlossberg (who stepped in for Walter Cronkite), was directed by Louis J. Horovitz and later broadcast by CBS on December 26 from 9pm to 11pm EST.

Carol Burnett has been granted nearly every sort of prize and accolade during her career, including Emmy, Oscar and Tony Awards. Endowed with a voice that can handle everything from a Tarzan yell to Sondheim, Burnett is best known for performing as a comedienne and singer. Yet, she has also written a best-selling memoir and the Broadway hit *Hollywood Arms*. And every time a new list of the funniest people or favorite comedians is published, Carol’s name or her television series is always near the top of the list. No tribute however can

possibly compare to this evening’s honor. Recently Carol herself called it “one of the most prestigious awards I’ve ever received.”<sup>†</sup>



*Before coming to the Kennedy Center, honorees receive their medallions at a State Department dinner, followed by a White House reception hosted by the President and First Lady*

Carol’s tribute was the last of the program and began with Julie Andrews (2001-Honoree) providing anecdotes of her four-decade friendship with Carol. Then in the video biography, she relates details about Carol’s youth growing up in a poor section of Hollywood to the highlights of her illustrious career. This was followed by the live presentation—a parade of Carol’s characters from *The Carol Burnett Show*, dressed in the original costumes Bob Mackie created exclusively for Carol—set to a medley of Broadway tunes conceived by Ken and Mitzie Welch.<sup>†</sup>

The musical montage begins with Scott and John Schneider entering from the wings singing the opener to Sondheim’s *Follies*, “Welcome them, these ‘Beautiful Girls.’” As the curtain behind them opens, a grand staircase is revealed and each of Carol’s characters appears at the top, being introduced in turn while the men serenade the lovely ladies and escort them down the steps. First Elaine Stritch as “Eunice” appears and Scott lends his arm, singing “You Stepped Out of a Dream”; Kim Cattrall as “Zelda” firmly rebuffs Schneider as he intones, “So ‘Lovely to Look At,’ delightful to know”; Florence Henderson as “Shirley” descends, singing and dancing with Scott to “Oh, You Beautiful Doll.”



<sup>†</sup> It was Ken and Mitzie Welch who invited Scott to participate.



Next Chita Rivera as old-lady “Stella” ambles onto the landing. But as Schneider croons “You and the Night and the Music,” he calls for Scott’s assistance in carrying the narcoleptic “beauty” down the steps; Reba McIntyre enters as “Nora Desmond,” while Harvey Korman, her “Max,” waits at the bottom; then Gary Beach as “Mrs. Wiggins” appears and Tim Conway, as “the boss, Mr. Tudball,” joins the milieu.

Julie Andrews returns, glowing as “Scarlett,” wearing the drapery-gown that has become an American icon in itself. Both Scott and John vie for her affections with “My Own True Love,” sung in their best operetta-like baritones. Finally, Bernadette Peters enters from the wings as the “Charlady.” Seating herself on the upside-down pail, she sings “I’m So Glad We Had This Time Together,” Carol’s signature closing number. Julie Andrews comes near and solos the second verse. Then all reassemble onstage to sing the final bars, bringing the audience to its feet. Everyone onstage then closes the number by replicating Carol’s Tarzan yell and her famous ear-tug.

This cavalcade could be considered a tribute to Bob Mackie as well. Burnett cannot overemphasize Mackie’s contribution to her show’s success: In addition to making fifty costumes every week, he was a director and a writer, adding that sometimes she would only “get” the character after she put on the costume and makeup. He designed the brilliant drapes-with-the-curtain-rod gown for the “Went with the Wind” sketch that she says got “one of the longest laughs we’ve ever had on the show.”<sup>22</sup>



*The names of presenters and performers are kept secret until the performance*

Every year this event is one of the cultural highlights of the holiday season in our nation’s capital, and serves as a fundraiser for the Kennedy Center’s performing arts, education and outreach programs. The 2003 event grossed over \$4 million from the sale of tickets which ranged from \$300 (individual) to \$30,000 (four-seat box).<sup>20</sup>

### A Tribute to Fred Rogers

Just days later, on Tuesday, December 9, 2003, Scott was back in North Hollywood, California to honor the late Fred M. Rogers at the 600-seat Leonard H. Goldenson Theatre at the Academy of Television Arts and Sciences. Fred Rogers, America’s dearly-loved *Mister Rogers*, died earlier in the year on February 27 at the age of 74. As a special surprise for Rogers’ widow, Joanne, Academy Chairman Dick Askin announced the establishment of a \$10,000 annual Fred Rogers Memorial Scholarship saying, “Not only did (Rogers’) work

demonstrate love, caring and respect for children, he also encouraged television professionals to use the medium to enlighten, educate and influence social consciousness and understanding.”

The evening’s program was conceived and written by Arthur Greenwald, who first wrote for *Mister Rogers’ Neighborhood* while still in college. David Hartman hosted, and Lily Tomlin, LeVar Burton, Jane Kaczmarek, Bradley Whitford, as well as Rogers’ colleagues David Newell (Mr. ‘Speedy Delivery’ McFeely) and Bill Isler (producer) were among the featured guests who provided anecdotes and reminiscences.



*Rogers wrote and sang his own songs on his television series*

Rogers studied musical composition in college, childhood development in graduate school, and went on to work as stage manager for NBC television. He then studied and became an ordained Presbyterian minister. Summing up his career in 2001, Rogers called it a “miracle” when “I finally realized I could use every single talent that had ever been given to me in the service of children.”<sup>23</sup> Often addressing childhood fears and emotions, his “neighborhood” was not always bright and happy. But it was always a safe and reassuring environment for young minds because of the daily repetitive routines, unchanging sets and characters, and the soft-spoken friend guiding them. With nearly 1000 episodes in its vaults, PBS continues to broadcast the show every weekday in most markets. Rogers has indeed left a legacy to a new generation of children.

The highlight of the evening was a musical medley of some of the familiar songs Rogers wrote and sang so many times during the 33 years of his series. Tyne Daly, Jean Louisa Kelly, Scott and John Schneider performed, joined by the Karousel Kids, Inc. and accompanied by Stan Beard on piano. Scott introduced his number, “What Do You Do?” saying, “As captain of the first Starship Enterprise, I’m uniquely qualified to tell you that we will always need Mr. Rogers’ brand of wisdom, even in the 22<sup>nd</sup> century.” As the medley closed, everyone on stage sang the familiar theme song from Rogers’ show, “It’s a Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood.”





Summing up Rogers' philosophy, Scott continued, "In a real sense we really are neighbors. How fitting that Fred Rogers' most powerful message was also the simplest and oldest—love thy neighbor." Then with the aid of archived footage, Fred Rogers himself led the audience in singing "It's You I Like."

### That's What Friends Are 4

Scott and Chelsea once again returned to the hallowed halls of Hamilton Academy and the Norman J. Pattiz Concert Hall on Saturday, February 28, 2004 to perform for Friends of Musical Theatre in an evening of "music, dance, comedy and celebrities," called *That's What Friends Are 4*. The fundraiser for the performing arts department had now become an annual event. Once again Ilene Graff and Ben Lanzarone were crucial to the production, with Lanzarone serving as Musical Director, and Paul Kreppel directing.

Each of the hosts for the evening—Allyse Beasley, Marcia Wallace and Scott—come onstage singing the Burt Bacharach/Carole Bayer Sagar hit song, "That's What Friends Are For." Joanne Worley came on near the end, employing her signature yodel-yell, to begin the opening act of the program.

In addition to his duties as emcee, Scott and Chelsea performed a well-rehearsed rendition of "Nobody's Perfect" from *I Do! I Do!* at the end of Act II. Both were dressed in formal evening attire, and began the song with a slightly altered dialog from the original production. In the original, the two are getting ready for an award dinner honoring author Michael, and Agnes states, "You know how uncomfortable I am with those kind of people." Michael corrects her grammar, saying "I should like to remind you that those kinds of people are largely responsible for the success of my latest book." But this evening both referred to each other by name, and Chelsea, with an air of repugnance, began by saying "those kind of people, those fans of yours." Scott replied tersely, "Those fans of mine are largely responsible for the success of my latest *Enterprise*." Scott's series was now in its fourth season, and his shout-out got a huge laugh and applause. And Chelsea's quip during the intro was purely in fun, since "those fans of his" are just as devoted to her.

More than sixty fans crowded into a high school classroom for a Meet & Greet after the show. All of us were pleased to see this number performed again, but Scott practically apologized, saying that he and Chelsea had wanted to do a couple of new numbers for the show, but because both of their schedules were so crazy, they decided on "Nobody's Perfect." "We like doing that number. It's a lot of fun."<sup>24</sup> In addition to the Q&A and the photo/autograph session, Jay treated fans to an advance screening of the promo for the soon-to-be-released Season One *QL-DVD*. Oh, Boy!



Photo by Emma Fee

*Chelsea changed for the reception, but Scott wore a tux throughout the evening*

### Hollywood Bowl TV Night II 2004

On July 9, 2004, Scott participated in *Television Night at the Hollywood Bowl II*, a sequel to the popular fundraiser first held in 2001, in Hollywood, California. The evening's program was a musical tribute to the composers of television themes and scores, performed by a wealth of television stars and the 80-piece Hollywood Bowl Orchestra, lead by Principal Conductor John Mauceri. Directed by Harry Kooperstein, the wide-ranging program took a year to plan, and by all accounts was nearly a sell-out of the 9,000-seat outdoor amphitheatre. The proceeds from these musical celebrations support the Television Academy Foundation's efforts toward education and preservation.

Joe Mantegna hosted the program which began with a medley of television themes from detective shows and westerns. Celebrating his 85<sup>th</sup> birthday, Earle Hagan was among the prominent composers featured in the program. Hagan came onstage for a medley of his television themes that included his 1939 jazz-standard, "Harlem Nocturne." Decades later this haunting melody became the theme for *Mike Hammer*, and to this day it continues to conjure up an image of the dark underworld that private investigators inhabit. Hagan's legacy includes more than 3000 hours of television music, including *The Andy Griffith Show*, *The Dick Van Dyke Show*, *I Spy*, and many, many more.

Due respect was also given to television icons who had recently passed away. Two of these were from children's television: Fred Rogers, who died in February 2003, and Bob Keeshan, (*Captain Kangaroo*), who died in January. Another salute was devoted to television choreographers and dedicated to June Taylor, who had just passed on in May. The June Taylor Dancers were a staple on *The Ed Sullivan Show* and *The Jackie Gleason Show* and their popularity became a driving force in making dance numbers a regular feature of weekly variety shows during the '50s and '60s. Donna McKechnie led a rousing presentation of "One" from *A Chorus Line* that included a dozen renowned choreographers, including Kenny Ortega (*Marilyn: An American Fable*), Anita Mann (*Solid Gold*), and Don Crichton (*Men, Movies and Carol*).

Closing Act I was a segment called “From Broadway to Television,” arranged by Glen Roven and orchestrated by Joseph Curiale. It featured a trio of stars with a home on television, but with one foot on Broadway—Sheryl Lee Ralph (*Mo’Nisha*), Peter Gallagher (*The O.C.*), and Scott. It began with all of them singing a Roven/Norman Martin ditty called “Eight Shows a Week,” referencing the customary number of performances for a stage production. The threesome makes it quite clear that all it takes is:

One good season on a television show/  
And 50 million people/ 80 million people/  
A hundred million people/ Finally know your name.

Approaching the audience, Scott spoke about his humble beginnings in a dinner-theatre touring company in North Carolina, mentioning he also drove a truck. He went on to say, “Maybe one day they’ll revive one of my favorite musicals, [Jerry Herman’s] *Milk and Honey*, and I’ll get to go back and sing this song.” Then he soared into an exuberant and powerful rendition of “Like a Young Man.”

Like a young man/ With a young dream/  
You will hear me/ Laughing at time/...  
Like a young man/ Who’s young forever/  
I swear I’ll never/ Grow old!



Scott, Sheryl Lee Ralph and Peter Gallagher  
onstage with the Hollywood Bowl Orchestra

Next Sheryl Lee Ralph came forward and performed “Dreamgirls” from her Tony-nominated hit show, while Scott and Peter provided backup. Then Gallagher spoke about his series, *The O.C.*, and mentioned he would have liked to have gotten the Broadway roles Scott had been offered; he sang the Frank Loesser number “Luck Be a Lady,” from his starring role as Sky Masterson in *Guys and Dolls*. Surprise guest, Carol Channing joined them and wrapped up the Broadway salute with her celebrated classic, “Hello, Dolly,” bringing the crowd to its feet.

Sprinkled throughout the evening’s fare were video clips and composer interviews from the Foundation’s Archive of American Television, presented on the new television screens that were part of the recent renovations at the Hollywood Bowl. Highlights during the second half of the evening included a sing-along segment, capped off by a fireworks display to the *Battlestar Galactica* theme and an encore of the theme from *I Love Lucy*.

## I Do! I Do! (Los Angeles 2005)

Scott and Chelsea’s original intention was to bring *I Do! I Do!* to a Los Angeles stage during the 2004 summer hiatus, but according to Scott, “the producers fell through on us, so we’ll look to reschedule.”<sup>25</sup> The production finally worked out a year later, on Friday, May 20, 2005 in a single performance in the Norman J. Pattiz Concert Hall at Hamilton High School. Among the estimated 350 attendees, fans arrived from all parts of the United States, England, Germany and Austria, virtually buying out the VIP section closest to the stage and once again helping support The Friends of Musical Theatre and the school.

Drawing from his 2002 “reconception” of the musical, Dennis Deal returned to direct Scott and Chelsea. Ben Lanzarone ably provided a piano accompaniment, supplemented by Vance Miller on Bass and Tonya Jaynes on drums. The sound, lighting and stage crew consisted entirely of students from the school, Sony Picture Studios provided furniture and props, and Paramount again provided the finer accoutrements: Costumes by Laura Wolford, under Kathryn Morrison’s tutelage; make-up by Vivian Baker; and hair by Michael Moore. All in all, it came across as quite similar to the 2002 St. Louis production.

One substantial difference was the temporary reconfiguration of the stage for the student production of *Thoroughly Modern Millie*. The traditional proscenium stage now included a “passarel” providing a runway around the orchestra pit, which is used to bring performers closer to the audience. Early in the show Agnes and Michael sang their wedding vows and walked toward each other, meeting at the center as the number concluded. It was also used to superb effect during “It’s a Well Known Fact.” As one fan explains: Scott strutted out and “went by just in front of us. He gave the most delightful hip-wiggle! It was quite memorable and done especially for us, I have no doubt. In another moment from that song... he looked back over his shoulder at us and pointed, as if to say ‘and you know it!’ There were audible gasps and cries of glee (and agreement!) from the fans both times.”<sup>26</sup> Still, Chelsea would not be outdone by this little escapade. Her well-polished “Flaming Agnes” was better than ever.

During the now-oft-performed “When the Kids Get Married,” Michael’s attempt at the saxophone still strained people’s ears, so Agnes remarked that it is apparent that “he didn’t graduate from the Hamilton Music Academy,” to which he countered, “But my daughter did!” Nevertheless for those of us who have seen this several times since 2002, Scott’s facility with the sax had definitely improved and when he managed a distinct trill flourish at the end, the audience erupted in a grand round of applause.

After the curtain call, the couple changed from their costumes and re-emerged in front of the stage to greet the hundred or so fans who stayed. A sort of Q&A developed, some of which dealt with the cancellation of *Enterprise*.

It is a shame that the *Enterprise* storylines never afforded Scott the opportunity to sing. Music is one of the oldest forms of entertainment. Considering that people nowadays carry their music with them wherever they go, I can’t imagine they would

leave it behind to live aboard a starship. And personally, if that were the case, I think I would rather stick around here.



*Casually dressed, Scott and Chelsea greeted fans after the performance of I Do! I Do! to conclude the evening with the customary photo-and-autograph session.*

Photos:  
(l) Amy Sydnor;  
(r) Maret Johnson

In the printed program, Scott and Chelsea personally “dedicated the evening to all of the incredible fans who have literally journeyed from around the globe to support (us) and this wonderful Academy....We are always looking for an excuse to work together and this show not only offers us that, but holds a special place in our hearts.”<sup>27</sup> Ours, too! Ours, too!

### Next: Legit Takes Center Stage

Despite the number of onstage appearances during this decade, nearly all were one-night benefit performances or charity events. But beginning with *Shenandoah* in 2006, Scott’s career embarked on a new journey, one he hopes will take him back to Broadway. Screen roles have become more sporadic and legitimate theater—for-profit Equity productions—seems to have become Scott’s main focus. In the span of less than a year (May 2007 to April 2008), Scott performed in four full-fledged productions, bringing with it the potential of much more to come. When I asked in March, Scott stated unequivocally that a return to Broadway is his goal. Will it be with *Dancing in the Dark*? His ever-modest reply was that he would have to be asked, emphasizing, “Oh, yeah! I’d like to find something to go. (I) just have to find the right thing.”

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I wish to express my deepest gratitude to Anita Balestino and Gail Erickson, for their invaluable insight and support, and to Maret Johnson who provided the wonderful screen captures; and to the following people who helped me with the research and provided me with materials for this installment: Sally Bakula; Scott Bakula; Margaret Colchin; Dennis Deal; Donna Dickenson; Emma Fee; Jo Fox ; Jenny Gantwerker and Nancy Hereford, Mark Taper Forum; Susan Jonas; Debbie Jones; Maret Johnson; Helene Kaplan; Michelle Kittredge; Donna Nelson, Terri M. Fischer Theater; Barb Pilnick; Jay Schwartz; Amy Sydnor; Carol Turley, Hamilton Academy of Music; Kate Whitaker; and librarians everywhere. Thank you all!

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