

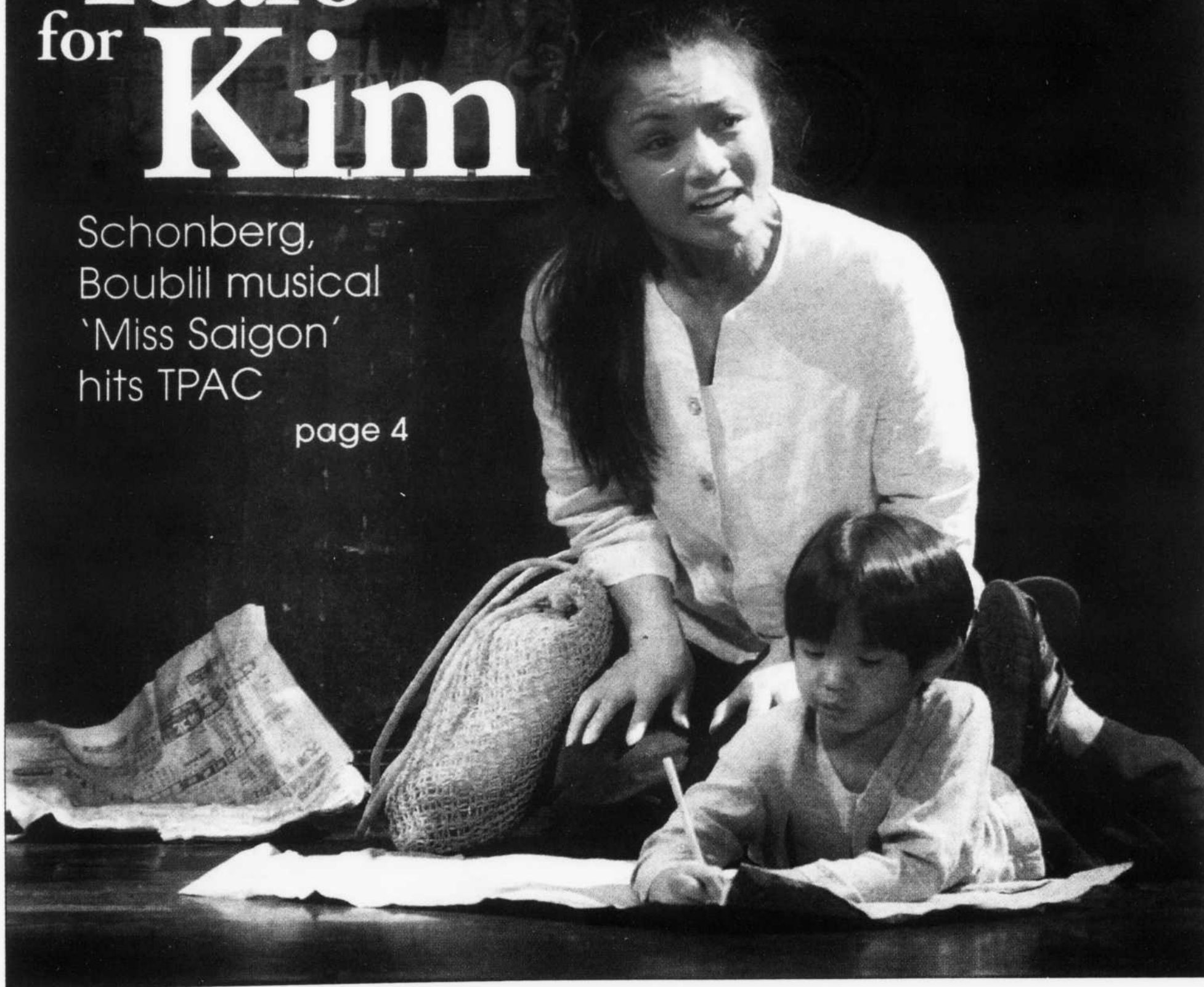
[flash]

November 18, 2004

# Tears for Kim

Schonberg,  
Boublil musical  
'Miss Saigon'  
hits TPAC

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# Audiences tend to fall asleep 'After the Sunset'

By William C. Fancher

So there's Max, the endlessly resourceful jewel thief with an aversion to retirement and drinks with little umbrellas. Then there's Lola, his partner/girlfriend, who is endlessly resourceful at finding situations to take off her clothes. Then there's Stan, the suspended FBI agent for whom arresting Max has become a decade-long obsession. Finally there's Henry, an American gangster who changed his name to Henri once he moved to the Caribbean and enjoys finding eloquent ways of describing drugs, gambling and prostitution.

These are the major players in *After the Sunset*, the new film from *Rush Hour* director Brett Ratner.

## 'After the Sunset'

**Starring** Pierce Brosnan,  
Salma Hayek

**Rated** PG-13

**New Line Cinema**

**Released** Nov. 12

**Rating** ★★  
(out of four stars)

They're all so deliberately quirky and offbeat, you can imagine that they come home at night to a pile of Elmore Leonard books on the nightstand, and have all the James Bond movies on DVD. But we've read all those books, and we've seen all those movies too, so they better have something new for us. They don't.

That's a real shame, too,



Photo provided by imdb.com

Salma Hayek and... uh... some guy, star in "After the Sunset."

considering the cast. Pierce Brosnan and Salma Hayek play Max and Lola, the world's hottest jewel thief couple. Woody Harrelson, who has not co-starred in a mainstream film since 1999's *Play It to the Bone*, blips back onto the radar as FBI agent Stan.

And a movie has never been made worse by the presence of Don Cheadle, who plays Henri. The film's

best scenes are the little sidebars, such as a fishing trip where Max and Stan accidentally catch a shark; they show off the life and chemistry these actors bring to their roles when not crushed under the grinding wheels of the plot.

The movie opens with the extravagant theft by Max and Lola of the second of three diamonds once owned by Napoleon (they

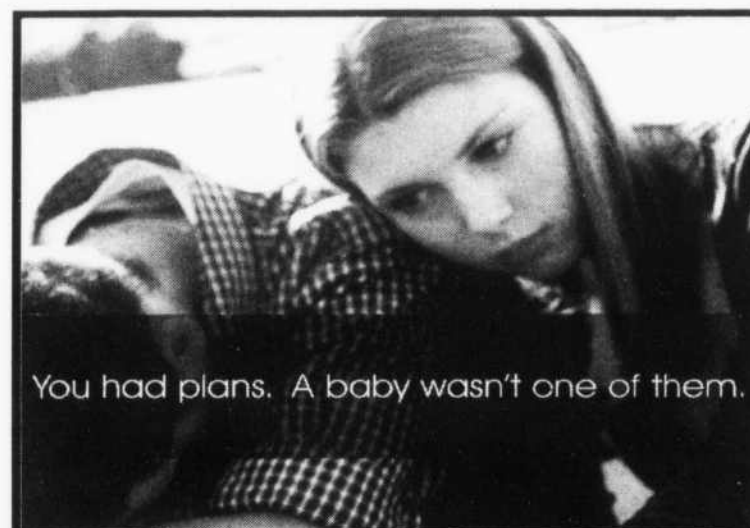
already have the first). They pluck the diamond literally out of Agent Stan's hands in one of those movie heists that flies by before you have a chance to realize how impossible it was.

Cut to several months later, and Max and Lola are retired on a lush Caribbean island. Stan doesn't think they're retired; he thinks it's all a setup to steal the third Napoleon diamond, which is locked up on a nearby cruise. Max pleads innocent, yet, then again, he's not exactly handling his new life of leisure well.

He's itching to get back in the saddle, but Lola, who enjoys domesticity, wants nothing to do with their old life. To make matters worse, Henri the gangster wants Max to steal the diamond to fund his various illegal operations.

So begins a series of crosses, double-crosses and confrontations, interspersed with a few funny scenes between Brosnan and Harrelson.

Cheadle and Hayek's characters are primarily functions of the plot, and



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See **Sunset**, 8



Photo provided by TPAC

The epic 'Miss Saigon' runs through Nov. 21. Tickets are available through Ticketmaster and the official TPAC website at [www.tpac.org](http://www.tpac.org).

# Tears for Kim

Stories by Collin Winter



# TPAC Production of 'Miss Saigon' whirs into Nashville

While most writers probably wouldn't choose to stage a romance in the middle of the Vietnam war, the writers of *Miss Saigon*, the latest production to hit Nashville's Tennessee Performing Arts Center, have done just that, with smashing success. *Miss Saigon* runs from Tuesday, Nov. 16 to Sunday, Nov. 21.

*Miss Saigon* was written by Alain Boublil and Claude-Michel Schoenberg, the creative team that produced *Les Miserables*. The two based the musical on Puccini's famous opera, 'Madame Butterfly'.

Set in the grim final days of the American involvement in Vietnam, *Miss Saigon* tells the story of the tragic romance between an American GI and a Vietnamese prostitute.

Shortly after striking a deal to

free Kim from her pimp, Chris, the soldier, is pushed out of Saigon along with the rest of the American military. Unbeknownst to him, however, Kim is pregnant with his child.

Flash forward three years: Chris, having thought Kim dead, is back in the United States and has married an American girl.

When informed that Kim is still alive after all, Chris returns to Southeast Asia to find her. Told that she cannot rejoin Chris and escape to America, Kim commits suicide, hoping that Chris will take her child with them.

*Miss Saigon* received heavy critical praise at its 1989 London debut. During its initial tour of the United Kingdom, it became one of the longest-running British musicals to date, playing continuously at the Drury Lane Royal Theatre for more

than 10 years. Worldwide, *Miss Saigon* has been performed in 10 languages for more than 31 million people, for a total of 19,000 performances.

The original production run was nominated for 11 Tony Awards (musical theatre's equivalent to the Oscar), including Best Musical, and won three. Overall, *Miss Saigon* has won 29 awards, including Best Musical awards from the Outer Critics' Circle, the London Evening Standard and the London Theatre Critics' Circle.

The current, nationally-touring production is based on Cameron Mackintosh's original 1989 production that toured the United Kingdom. The new tour features fully redesigned sets in order to accommodate smaller venues; the original production's sets were so

large that they would only fit in the United Kingdom's largest theatres.

Mackintosh is also responsible for such world-famous productions such as *Cats*, *Les Miserables*, *Oliver!*, *My Fair Lady* and *Phantom of the Opera*. Mackintosh's *Oliver!* played at TPAC in October.

*Miss Saigon* has eight scheduled performances at TPAC: Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, 7:30 p.m.; Friday, 8 p.m.; Saturday, 2 p.m. and 8 p.m.; Sunday, 2 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.

Tickets may be purchased before the show or by calling the box office at (615) 255-ARTS. Prices range from \$18- \$66, but student discounts are available.

More information is available from the official *Miss Saigon* Web site, [www.missasaigontour.com](http://www.missasaigontour.com). ★



## TPAC actor D.J. Oliver rhapsodizes over college, acting, chasing fame

[flash]'s Collin Winter sat down with *Miss Saigon*'s D.J. Oliver, who plays John, a marine who befriends Chris (Alan Gillespie) in the play.



**Collin Winter:** What attracted you to this particular musical?

**D.J. Oliver:** Well, I went to college at Wayne State, in Michigan. I got my Bachelors in Fine Arts there. After college, I moved to New York. I did *Smokey Joe's Café*, then a few pop shows in Japan. *Miss Saigon* was just something different. I want to do it all, you know: TV, film, Broadway. I'm always looking for diversity in my projects; *Miss Saigon* is difficult, it's a real rock opera. But it's a rock opera where I get to do some real acting.

Photo provided by TPAC

Jennifer Paz stars in the TPAC production of 'Miss Saigon.' For more information about 'Miss Saigon' and other TPAC shows, visit the official Web site at [www.tpac.org](http://www.tpac.org).

**Winter:** What attracted you to the character of John?

**Oliver:** It was really the songs. I mean, he has some of the best songs in the whole show, like in the second act. His songs really add to the show, they help move it along.

Also, it's a different style of music than what I've done before. He's involved in conflict, both in the war and emotionally, and that comes out in his music. It's a big stretch for me, since my formal training is in the core fundamentals of acting.

**Winter:** You've done a number of musicals in your career; what attracted you to musicals, rather than the more-traditional theatre?

**Oliver:** Well, I started out doing more traditional acting. When I was in college, getting my bachelors, we were a very strict theatre-only program. Most of my training was in strict acting. Most of my background was doing plays, with no singing on stage. When I came to New York and landed *Smokey Joe's Café*, that was all about the voice. And, you know, having a degree

See **Oliver**, 8

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## [flash]

concert calendar

★ – [flash] pick of the week

**Thursday, Nov. 18**

- A Stone's Throw, Page 80 and Mack the Knife at the Blue Sky Court, 8 p.m.
- Folk Medicine at the Exit/In, 9 p.m.
- Hem at 3rd and Lindsley, 9:30 p.m.
- ★ Blazin' in Da Boro at Wall Street, 10 p.m.
- Riding A Gimmick at Windows, 10 p.m.
- Luna Halo at The End, 9 p.m.

**Friday, Nov. 19**

- ★ Jive Turkey Party featuring Big Fella, Te' Arthur and Overzealous at Wall Street, 9 p.m.
- Luna at the Exit/In, 10 p.m.
- Palomar at Grimey's, 6 p.m.
- Hopesfall, Engine Down Death Comesto Matteson and The Sincerity Guild at The Blue Sky Court, 7 p.m.
- Old Union at The Mercy Lounge, 9:30 p.m.
- Jim Lauderdale and Sandra McCracken at 3rd and Lindsley, 9:30 p.m.

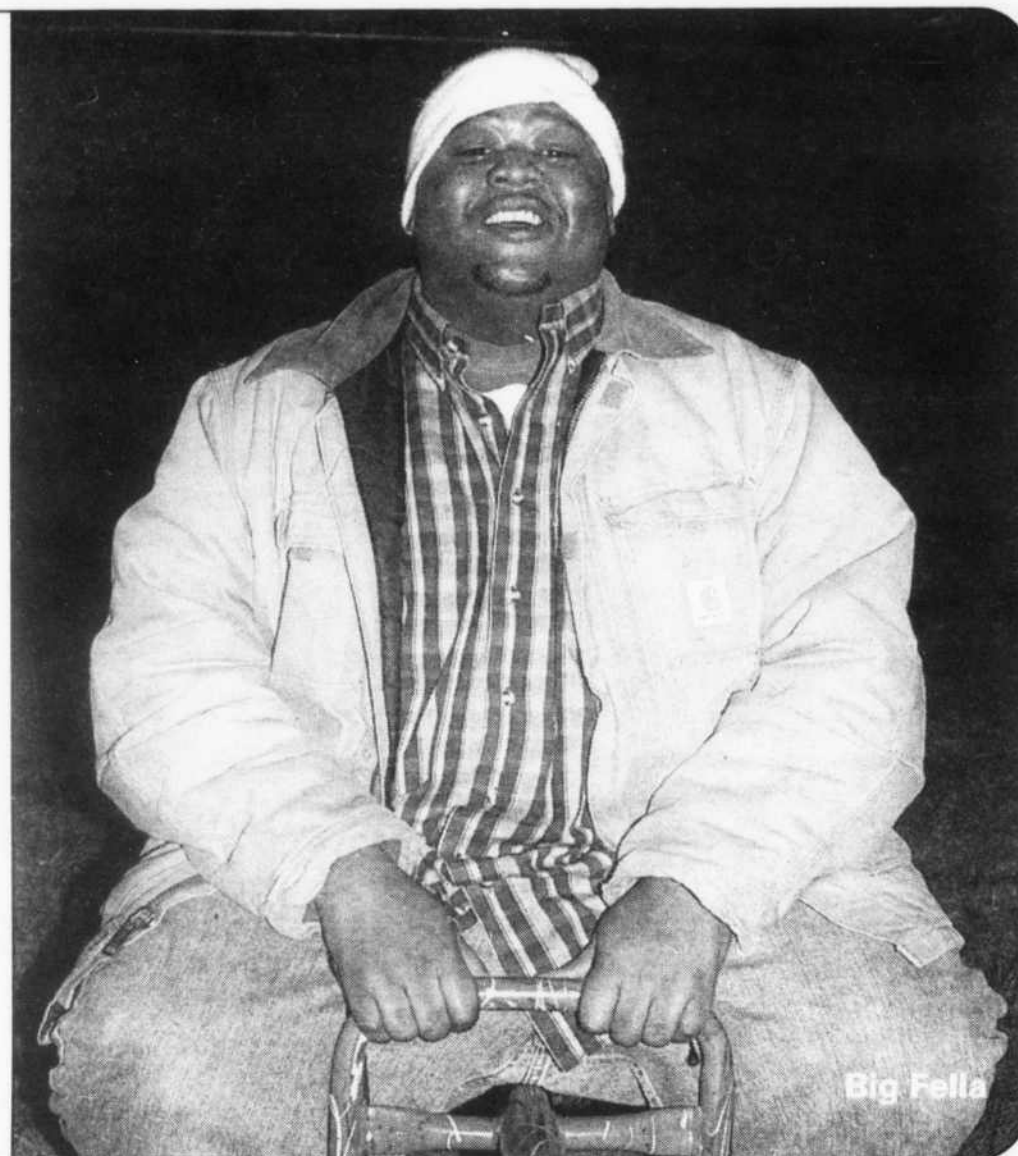
- Common Ground at Windows, 11 p.m.

**Saturday, Nov. 20**

- Fluid Ounces, Miles of Clear June and Cutthroat Junction at The Five Spot, 9 p.m.
- Jesus H. Chrlyser, Christine at The Red Rose 9 p.m.
- The Glitter Dragons, Z28 at Gentlemen Jim's (Greenland), 9 p.m.
- Justin Earle & the Swindlers at Hair of the Dog, 8:30 p.m.
- Ryan Adams at The Ryman 7:30 p.m.
- ★ Rachel Pearl with Plan B at Liquid Smoke, 9:30 p.m.

**Sunday, Nov. 21**

- Aireline, Cool Hand Luke at The Exit/In, 9 p.m.
- Herchal Bailey at Bourbon Street Blues Bar, 9 p.m.
- ★ William Elliott Whitmore, Black Soul Tyler, Michael Acree at The Red Rose, 9 p.m.



Big Fella

22

- Asschapel, The Wayward and Christine at The Five Spot, 9 p.m.
- The Time Jumpers at The Station Inn, 9 p.m.

23

- Miles of Clear June at The End, 9 p.m.
- The Pink Spiders at The Red Rose, 9 p.m.
- The Sidemen at The Station Inn, 9 p.m.

24

- Quarter to Nine at The Boro, 9:30 p.m.
- Tony Danza at The Muse, 7 p.m.

25

- Bonepony at The Mercy Lounge, 9 p.m.
- Mile 8 at 3rd and Lindsley, 9 p.m.

26

- Zig/Zag at The Basement, 8 p.m.

27

- Vesta Rose at The Red Rose, 9 p.m.
- Garrison Starr and Friends at The Basement, 9 p.m.

28

- Authority Zero at The Exit/In, 9 p.m.
- Jazz Brunch with Annie Sellick at Bosco's, 11 a.m.

**WRLT Playlist**

1. **Bruce Hornsby** "Gonna Be Some..."
2. **Mark Knopfler** "Boom, Like That"
3. **Keane** "Somewhere Only We..."
4. **Crosby & Nash** "Lay Me Down"
5. **John Fogerty** "Deja Vu"
6. **R.E.M.** "Leaving New York"
7. **Steve Earle** "The Revolution..."
8. **Snow Patrol** "Run"
9. **Modest Mouse** "Float On"
10. **Carbon Leaf** "Life Less Ordinary"

Compiled by WRLT-FM 100.1 music director Keith Coes. Lightning 100 is Nashville's progressive radio station.

**CMJ Top 10**

1. **Elliott Smith** *from a basement...*
2. **Ted Leo** *Shake the Sheets*
3. **Futureheads** *The Futureheads*
4. **Nick Cave** *Abattoir Blues*
5. **Tom Waits** *Real Gone*
6. **Neko Case** *The Tigers Have Spoken*
7. **Interpol** *Antics*
8. **Blood Brothers** *Crimes*
9. **Luna** *Rendezvous*
10. **Q And Not U** *Power*

Compiled by the College Music Journal. CMJ regularly measures airplay on commercial, non-commercial and college radio stations.

**WMTS Playlist**

1. **Le Tigre** *This Island*
2. **Q And Not U** *Power*
3. **Aloha** *Here Comes Everyone*
4. **Black Keys** *Rubber Factory*
5. **Various Artists** *How Soon Is Now...*
6. **Deerhoof** *Bibidi Babidi Boo*
7. **The Clash** *London Calling*
8. **Luna** *Rendezvous*
9. **Interpol** *Antics EP*
10. **TV on the Radio** "New Health..."

Compiled by WMTS-FM 88.3 music director Jason Jones. WMTS 88.3 is MTSU's student-run radio station.



Continued from **Oliver**, page 4

in very strict, very traditional acting; I really jumped at the chance to do something so different, something that was all about the voice. Like I said, I want to do it all; maybe this will be my stepping stone into TV or film or something. At the same time, though, this is a really emotional show, and it was something I wanted to be a part of.

**Winter:** How does the acting you do in a musical compare with the more traditional acting you were trained in?

**Oliver:** In some ways, it's more like film, it's more intimate. You get to do these show-stopping songs, like in those pop shows in Japan, or like in *Dracula*, but it's really more about selling it to the audience. It's strange, but musicals feel like a more internal thing.

You've got these battles of emotions, you're telling the story, but you've got to convey all that to a huge audience without making a fool of yourself. In some ways, it feels like you're more intimate with the audience.

The experience of doing *Miss Saigon*, of doing such an emotional show, has really opened doors for me in terms of my acting – it's stretched my talent. It feels like getting back to raw acting, to the core of acting. I've learned a lot in the last six months [of

doing the show]; sometimes I'll just sit in the wings and watch the other actors and think, 'Wow. It's been a good learning experience.'

**Winter:** You said that you weren't trained in music or musical theatre, but here you are as part of a musical production on a nationwide tour; how did you develop your talent as a singer?

**Oliver:** I've always been singing, ever since I was little, like in the church choir. When I was getting my degree, like I said, it was very focused on the fundamentals of acting – we would do maybe one musical a year, if that. When I came to New York, though, I was trying to get jobs doing TV and film and soaps. It was hard, though, since I didn't have an agent, and there weren't many auditions open if you didn't have an agent to get you in.

So, in a way, I started doing musical tours for the money, really. But they were good jobs, they gave me a change to explore my talent. I had a few voice lessons here and there, but, no, I didn't really have any formal training; I was just always singing in my free time, in church, at home. I want to as much as I can, as wide a range of projects as I can, so I'm kinda using this talent to work my way up.

**Winter:** Since this is a university newspaper, I almost have to ask this:

what would you say to someone majoring in vocal performance, or theatre, who wanted to follow your footsteps? What advice would you give them?

**Oliver:** I'd say this is a great business, it can be lots of fun, but you have to be completely serious going into it. Also, this business is full of people exactly like you. Like, one of my first experiences in New York, I got a call back for a part I thought I was perfect for. You know, I thought, I'm a good-looking black male with a good smile, and I can sing. I got to the call back, and the room was full of good-looking black males with good smiles; we all even had shaved heads.

So, you have to be in this for the long run. Being an actor isn't all just fun, especially if you've got a family to support, like I did. You've got to be passionate about this, because there are a lot of ups and downs.

But, if you're meant to do this, if this is your calling, you'll get there. But you've got to be determined; this business isn't easy, it's full of rejection. I've been lucky, I've had a pretty-much constant job for two years now, but that's not normal. So, be determined, and always be watching the veterans, try to pick up new tricks. But, hey, I'm happy; I'm 26 and I'm doing what I want to do. ★

Continued from **Sunset**, page 3

not given many scenes to stretch out. Henri is a stock villain and Lola becomes the ole ball-and-chain, with little to do and less to wear beyond that.

This is an eye candy movie. Despite its PG-13 rating there's plenty of skin for the guys and girls to enjoy.

For some, the briefest glimpse of Salma Hayek or Pierce Brosnan is worth the ticket price.

The tropical locations are beautifully photographed by Ratner and cinematographer Dante Spinotti, which all goes to illustrate a point that is generally true for this type of movie – the hotter it looks, the duller it is. ★

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