American Songbook

Lead Support provided by PGIM

The Program

Wednesday, March 8, 2017, at 8:30 pm

The Songs of Elizabeth Swados

featuring Utkarsh Ambudkar, Michael Friedman, Josie de Guzman, Karen Kandel, Taylor Mac, Grace McLean, AnnMarie Milazzo, Rachel Stern, and Shaina Taub

Kris Kukul, Musical Director and Piano Matthew Dean Marsh, Associate Musical Director and Keyboards

This evening's program is approximately 75 minutes long and will be performed without intermission.

Please make certain all your electronic devices are switched off.

Major support for Lincoln Center's American Songbook is provided by Amy & Joseph Perella. Endowment support provided by Bank of America

This performance is made possible in part by the Josie Robertson Fund for Lincoln Center.

Steinway Piano
The Appel Room
Jazz at Lincoln Center's Frederick P. Rose Hall

Additional support for Lincoln Center's American Songbook is provided by Meg and Bennett Goodman, Rita J. and Stanley H. Kaplan Family Foundation, Inc., The DuBose and Dorothy Heyward Memorial Fund, Jill & Irwin B. Cohen, The Shubert Foundation, Great Performers Circle, Chairman's Council, and Friends of Lincoln Center.

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Thursday, March 9, at 8:30 pm

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Friday, March 10, at 8:30 pm

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An Evening with Kristen & Bobby Lopez

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Thursday, March 23, at 8:00 pm

Julian & Leon Fleisher: The Man I Love

Friday, March 24, at 8:00 pm

Olga Bell

Monday, March 27, at 8:00 pm Matt Gould & Griffin Matthews

Tuesday, March 28, at 8:00 pm

The Cactus Blossoms

The Appel Room is located in Jazz at Lincoln Center's Frederick P. Rose Hall. The Stanley H. Kaplan Penthouse is located at 165 West 65th Street, 10th floor.

For tickets, call (212) 721-6500 or visit American Songbook.org. Call the Lincoln Center Info Request Line at (212) 875-5766 or visit AmericanSongbook.org for complete program information.

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We would like to remind you that the sound of coughing and rustling paper might distract the performers and your fellow audience members.

In consideration of the performing artists and members of the audience, those who must leave before the end of the performance are asked to do so between pieces. Flash photography and the use of recording equipment are not allowed in the building.

A Mentor and Creator Whose Time Has Come

By Michael Friedman

It says a lot about how young I was when, as an undergraduate, I was offered a chance to work with Liz Swados, and I nearly turned it down to be in a university drag revue. Seldom in life do two roads clearly diverge—the visionary, feminist artist and the nostalgic, misogynistic (as I see it now) Ivy League club. On the advice of a very smart friend, I dropped out and changed my life. Cantata 2000 was Liz's setting of contemporary poetry, stories, and other writing by young and mostly under-the-radar writers, a sort of State of the Union in song, written on and with her undergraduate performers. I had no idea theater could do that. Or that a major theater artist could have such faith and trust in a young music director, treating me, and the actors, like equals and partners, while always maintaining complete authority.

After I graduated, I moved to New York and was working at a consulting firm when Liz called: Would I work on a new piece at La MaMa—oh, and maybe something at BAM, and then maybe this Brecht adaptation with Andrei Serban at Columbia, which did she mention was now going to Berlin—until I was basically working full-time. At some point, the consulting firm kindly told me that since I had stopped coming to work, they assumed I had quit. Two more roads diverging, and I had made the choice, this time without realizing it. I was free. Liz showed me, like she was always trying to show the American Theater, that things don't always have to be this way (whatever "this way" might be): They (work, life) can be more personal, more political, more resonant, more timeless, more.

And the body of work: the most exciting and radical American confrontation with the Greeks, perhaps the most archetypal and thoughtful musical of the '70s, the most unexpected Alice in Wonderland, the always searching works on Jewish themes (over 20 of them across her entire career), the extraordinary oratorio *Missionaries*, and, recently, a dizzying array of myths and stories, contemporary and classical—*Kaspar Hauser, The Golem, From the Fire* (about the Triangle Shirtwaist factory fire), *Jabu*—and, in an astonishing work, her own depression. There's also the too-little-known masterpiece *The Beautiful Lady*, a deeply felt meditation on the triumph and catastrophe of the Russian avant-garde. (And look, I've neglected the collaborations with Garry Trudeau! The confrontations with Shakespeare, Brecht, Chekhov! Also, the only person, ever, nominated in one year for best musical, direction, score, book, and choreography at the Tonys. I mean...)

We don't know how to talk about teaching in America. But as Liz's teaching and work were inseparable, let's just say it's hard to think of another theater artist who loved young people more, who understood and listened to them better, and who wrote for them so well. Only Liz could make a work of "community theater" for at-risk youth that was also her "big hit" without

American Songbook I Note on the Program

contradiction. Take a look at the list of the people who worked with her as students—Adam Sandler, Kris Kukul, Shaina Taub, Sam Pinkleton, Jo Lampert, to name just a few—it is devastating.

That would be enough, but I think another of Liz's achievements has been underplayed—her understanding of music and lyrics. She set words as she heard them, creating satisfying musical structures that were never as interested in rhyme or scansion as much as in intention and communication. Her songs would seem hard to learn (especially her notorious quarter-note triplets), but in performance her music was deceptively, amazingly, natural. Almost—if I'm getting solemn (and Liz was seldom solemn)—as if finally the achievements of Stravinsky, of Janáček, of the Seegers and the folk movement, were being applied to musical theater. Anyone who worked with her, certainly I, could never quite look at songwriting the same way again. Liz is in the DNA of my work.

I wish I could say that in her lifetime, Liz really got her proper due from the theater community, from the *New York Times*, from the institutions she defined, from me. She did not. (That is what makes tonight's concert so special, and so necessary.) But she continued to make work with a huge sense of mission, of purpose, of commitment, setting another example of how to make art that made nonsense of the culture market.

At some point Liz sensed that I was itching to make my own work; we were in the loft she shared with Roz and the dogs, and she mentioned that maybe we should take some time off from each other. And that was it. She set me free yet again, which is a gift I will never, ever, be able to repay.

Michael Friedman is a composer and lyricist in New York City. He is a founding artist of The Civilians, director of Public Forum and artist-in-residence at the Public Theater, and artistic director of New York City Center's Encores! Off-Center.

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Elizabeth Swados



Elizabeth Swados (1951–2016) composed, wrote, and directed over 30 theater pieces, including The Trilogy, Nightclub Cantata, Runaways, The Haggadah, Alice in Concert, Doonesbury, Rap Master Ronnie, Jerusalem (with Yehuda Amichai), Esther, The Red Sneaks, Jonah, Job, Groundhog, Missionaries, The 49 Years, Jewish Girlz, Jabu, Atonement, Kaspar Hauser, La MaMa Cantata, and The Nomad. Her work has been per-

formed at the Flea Theater, La MaMa, Public Theater, BAM, Carnegie Hall, New York City Center, at regional theaters across the country, and all over the world. In 2004 she joined the faculty of New York University's Tisch School of the Arts, where her collaborative theatrical extravaganza *The Reality Show* has become a school institution. She received five Tony Award nominations, three Obie Awards, a Guggenheim Fellowship, Ford Grant, Lila Acheson Wallace Grant, and a PEN Citation. Ms. Swados also wrote many books, including the theater textbook *At Play: Teaching Teenagers Theater* and the Ken Book Award—winning picture book *My Depression*, which she adapted as an animated short for HBO in 2014 starring Sigourney Weaver, Steve Buscemi, and Fred Armisen. The Feminist Press posthumously published her last novel, *Walking the Dog*, in 2016. Her poetry has appeared in many anthologies, and her collections of poetry have been published in three separate books by Hanging Loose Press.

Utkarsh Ambudkar

Born in Baltimore, Utkarsh Ambudkar earned a bachelor of fine arts degree from New York University's Tisch School of the Arts. During his time in New York, he performed in several theatrical productions, receiving a Lucille Lortel nomination for his work in *Animal Out of Paper* at the Second Stage Theatre. Mr. Ambudkar was also a member of the Beatards, a hip-hop group that has performed with Santigold, Azealia Banks, Public Enemy, and Questlove. He was also a principal performer in the Freestyle Love Supreme, an improvisational hip-hop troupe. This musical background led to Mr. Ambudkar's breakout Hollywood role alongside Anna Kendrick and Elizabeth Banks in Universal's *Pitch Perfect*.

Mr. Ambudkar's television credits include *The Mindy Project*, Showtime's *House of Lies* with Don Cheadle, Comedy Central's *Key & Peele*, and most recently *The Simpsons* as Apu's American nephew, which made him the first Indian-American to lend his voice to the show. Earlier this year he performed

alongside Ice Cube in *Ride Along 2* and *Barbershop 3: The Next Cut*, as well as in a recurring role on ABC's *The Muppets*. His upcoming projects include a role on the MTV comedy *Mary+Jane* and a leading role in the indie feature *Basmati Blues* opposite Brie Larson and Donald Sutherland. He will also appear next year in Hulu's anthology series *Dimension 404* and will begin shooting the Showtime/Lionsgate pilot *White Famous* opposite Jamie Foxx this fall.

Michael Friedman

Michael Friedman first worked with Elizabeth Swados in 1997. He has written music and lyrics for the musicals *Unknown Soldier, The Fortress of Solitude, Love's Labour's Lost,* and *Bloody Bloody Andrew Jackson,* and with The Civilians for *Canard Canard Goose, Gone Missing, Nobody's Lunch, This Beautiful City, In the Footprint, The Great Immensity, Pretty Filthy,* and *Rimbaud in New York,* as well as music for Anne Washburn's *Mr. Burns.* He is the co-author of the play *Paris Commune,* and has been a Barron Professor at the Princeton Environmental Institute and artist-in-residence at Spring Workshop Hong Kong. Mr. Friedman has given a TEDx talk about the songwriting process, and an evening of his songs was featured on Lincoln Center's 2010 American Songbook series. His series of election songs were also featured on *The New Yorker Radio Hour* on WNYC, and he received an Obie Award for sustained achievement. He is currently artist-in-residence and director of the Public Forum at the Public Theater, as well as artistic director of New York City Center's Encores! Off-Center.

Josie de Guzman

Josie de Guzman worked with Elizabeth Swados during the late '70s and '80s on Runaways, Lullabye and Goodnight, Haggadah, Missionaries, Jerusalem, Nightclub Cantata, Song of Songs, and several concerts. Her Broadway career also includes Tony nominations for Guys and Dolls and West Side Story, and creating roles in Nick & Nora, Runaways, and Carmelina. She won the 2002 Connecticut Critics Award for her portrayal of Anna in The King and I. Off-Broadway, Ms. de Guzman has appeared in Tamara and Once Removed.

She has been working steadily for the past 15 years at the Alley Theatre, where she has played numerous roles including Hippolyta and Titania in Midsummer Night's Dream, Clarissa Hailsham-Brown in Agatha Christie's Spider's Web, Detective Morris in The Nether, Juliana in The Other Place, Kate Keller in All My Sons, Penelope Sycamore in You Can't Take It with You, Linda in Death of a Salesman, Belinda Blair in Noises Off, Arkadina in The Seagull, Vera Claythorne in And Then There Were None, Miss Casewell in The Mousetrap, the title role in Mrs. Mannerly, Mrs. Gibbs in Our Town, and Viola in Twelfth Night. Her regional theater appearances include Hartford Stage (Diosa, Our Town), Great Lakes Theater (She Loves Me), and the Denver Center (Man of La Mancha). Her films include Exiles in New York, FX, and

FX2, and television appearances include Miami Vice, The Cosby Show, Third Watch, All My Children, and Guiding Light. Her recordings include Lullabies for Everyone and Nanas Para Todos, as well as the cast recordings of Guys and Dolls, Carmelina, and Runaways.

Karen Kandel

Karen Kandel is co-artistic director of the New York-based theater company Mabou Mines. Her performance awards include three Obies as well as Drama-Logue, Connecticut Critics Circle, Craig Noel, and Edinburgh Festival Fringe's Herald Angel awards; nominations for Helen Hayes and Lucille Lortel (2016) awards; and a Drama League citation for Outstanding Performance. Ms. Kandel has received support for her own writing and interdisciplinary work from the Rasmuson Foundation (Alaska artist-in-residence), Asian Cultural Council, Theatre Communications Group (Future Collaborations, Fox Fellowship), Peter S. Reed Foundation, Jim Henson Foundation, and Spencer Cherashore Fund. She is one of six artists in the U.S. to receive the Audrey Skirball-Kenis T.I.M.E. Grant, and is also a United States Artists Ziporyn Fellow.

Taylor Mac

Taylor Mac (who uses the gender pronoun "judy") is a playwright, actor, singer-songwriter, performance artist, director, and producer whose work has been performed at Lincoln Center, the Public Theater, Playwrights Horizons, American Repertory Theater, Sydney Opera House, the Spoleto Festival, and many other venues and festivals across the globe. Judy is the author of 17 full-length plays and performance pieces including the critically acclaimed *Hir*, *The Lily's Revenge* (Obie Award), *The Walk Across America for Mother Earth, Red Tide Blooming* (Ethyl Eichelberger Award), and *The Be(a)st of Taylor Mac* (Edinburgh Festival Fringe's Herald Angel Award). Judy also created, in collaboration with Mandy Patinkin, Susan Stroman, and Paul Ford, *The Last Two People on Earth: An Apocalyptic Vaudeville*, which judy performs and tours with Mr. Patinkin. Mac is the creator of *A 24-Decade History of Popular Music* and has previously been featured on the American Songbook series.

Judy's acting roles include Shen Teh/Shui Ta in the Foundry Theatre's production of *Good Person of Szechwan* at La MaMa and the Public Theater (for which judy received Lucille Lortel and Drama League Award nominations) and Puck/Egeus in the Classic Stage Company's *A Midsummer's Night Dream*. Mac is the recipient of multiple awards, including the Doris Duke Performing Artist Award, Guggenheim and Peter Zeisler Awards, the Herb Alpert Award in Theater, a Helen Merrill Playwright Award, and an Obie. Judy was named *Time Out New York*'s Best Cabaret Performer in New York in 2012, and the *Village Voice*'s Best Theater Actor in New York (2013) and Best Male Vocalist (2015). Judy is currently a New York Theater Workshop Usual Suspect.

Grace McLean

Grace McLean is an actress, singer, writer, and teacher who currently appears on Broadway in *Natasha, Pierre & the Great Comet of 1812*. She also performed in its Off-Broadway run, along with hits such as *Brooklynite, Bedbugs!!!*, and *Sleep No More*. In addition, Ms. McLean makes time for her acclaimed original music, both as a solo artist and with her band, Grace McLean & Them Apples. Her work as a performer and educator has taken her countries abroad, including Pakistan, where she and her band participated in a U.S. State Department–sponsored tour. In New York, she has performed twice on the American Songbook series (2015 and 2016), as well as at BAM, New York City Center, Joe's Pub, 54 Below, Rockwood Music Hall, Ars Nova (where she developed the interactive concert experience *Grace McLean Lives in Concert*), and the Museum of the American Indian. She also appears at the ACE Hotel, where she collaborates monthly on the Dance Cartel's show OnTheFloor.

Ms. McLean's pop opera *In the Green* (about the 12th-century German mystic Hildegard of Bingen) has been developed at CAP21, SPACE on Ryder Farm, and the Johnny Mercer Writer's Colony at Goodspeed Musicals. She released her latest EP in 2015, featuring the single and her first feature video, "Natural Disaster." *Make Me Breakfast*, an EP from Grace McLean & Them Apples, came out in 2012.

AnnMarie Milazzo

Grammy-nominated AnnMarie Milazzo's Broadway credits include vocal designer and arranger for Spring Awakening, the Pulitzer Prize-winning Next to Normal (Booth Theatre), If/Then (Richard Rogers Theatre), and Finding Neverland (Lunt-Fontanne Theatre). She has also worked on Bright Lights, Big City (New York Theater Workshop), Dangerous Beauty (Pasadena Playhouse), Prometheus Bound (American Repertory Theater), Some Lovers, Burt Bacharach's new musical (Old Globe), and the Off-Broadway revival of Carrie (Lucille Lortel Theatre). She has also arranged for the Paramount film The Marc Pease Experience starring Ben Stiller, composed the theme song for the movie Beautiful Boy starring Michael Sheen and Maria Bello, and written the music and lyrics for the short film Pretty Dead Girl, which won a Sundance Film Festival Special Jury Award. Ms. Milazzo also arranged, co-produced, and wrote original music for the 2016 Radio City New York Spectacular; arranged music for SeaWorld Orlando's O Wondrous Night; vocals for Busch Garden's London Rocks; and wrote the lyrics for Cirque du Soleil's Le Rêve in Las Vegas and Franco Dragone's Carmen at La Jolla Playhouse.

Rachel Stern

Rachel Stern is a graduate of New York University. Her Broadway credits include Shrek the Musical, High Fidelity, and Tarzan the Musical. She worked

with Elizabeth Swados from 1994 until last year, when she voiced the main singing character, Liz, in HBO's *My Depression*. Ms. Stern also sings all over the country in a band with Jarrod Spector. Television appearances include *Law & Order, Law & Order SVU, Louie, The Big C,* and *Unforgettable*. She also voices several video games, cartoons, and commercials.

Shaina Taub

Shaina Taub is a Vermont-raised, New York-based songwriter and performer. A Jonathan Larson Grant winner and previous composer-in-residence at Ars Nova, Ms. Taub made her Lincoln Center solo debut in the 2015 American Songbook series, and her concerts have been featured on WNYC's Year's Best Gigs list. She played Feste in her original musical adaptation of *Twelfth Night*, commissioned by the Public Theater as part of its Public Works initiative, at the Delacorte Theater. Ms. Taub also wrote songs for and starred in Bill Irwin and David Shiner's *Old Hats*, directed by Tina Landau at the Signature Theatre. Her songs have been performed by Audra McDonald and Sutton Foster, and she writes music for *Sesame Street*. She is currently writing a new musical about Alice Paul and the American women's suffrage movement, and this year performs a monthly concert at Joe's Pub. Ms. Taub's latest album is *Visitors*.

Kris Kukul

Kris Kukul (musical director, piano) worked as Elizabeth Swados's musical director and arranger for 15 years. Projects together included Jabu, Kaspar Hauser, The Nomad, Heracles, My Depression (HBO), The Violence Project, and others. He provided additional arrangements for the 2016 New York City Center production of Runaways and for Swados's LaMaMa Cantata, which has been seen in Japan, Serbia, Turkey, Italy, Croatia, Macedonia, and New York. Internationally he travelled with Swados's From the Fire (Edinburgh Festival Fringe), Heracles and The Frogs (Athens & Epidaurus Festival). Mr. Kukul's current projects include David Byrne's Saint Joan (Public Theater), Beetlejuice, Songbird, The Last Goodbye (Old Globe/Williamstown Theatre Festival). For ten seasons he was the resident music director of the Williamstown Theatre Festival and directed the legendary Late-Night Cabarets. Recent projects include Darko Tresnjak's production of Kiss Me, Kate (Old Globe/Hartford Stage), Kate Baldwin: Extraordinary Machine (54 Below), The Heart of Robin Hood (American Repertory Theater, Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre, Royal Alexandria Theatre, Toronto), June Moon and Animal Crackers (Williamstown). As a composer, Mr. Kukul has written music for Camp Monster and Wing It, both of which premiered at the Williamstown Theatre Festival, Oliver Twist at the Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey, and A Midsummer Night's Dream for the National Theatre of Greece. He is on the adjunct faculty at New York University's Tisch School of the Arts.

Matthew Dean Marsh

Matthew Dean Marsh (associate musical director, keyboards) is a composer, writer, and performer. His compositions have been heard at Madison Square Garden, Lincoln Center, Michigan Opera Theatre, BAM, McKittrick Hotel (Sleep No More), the White House, and TriBeCa Film Festival. Accompaniment credits include Joseph Keckler (at Centre Pompidou in Paris), Ato Blankson-Wood (The Total Bent), Todd Almond, Jo Lampert, Salty Brine, David Cale, Max Jenkins, Erin Markey, Shaina Taub, and Sherie Rene Scott. He has worked on projects for directors Steve Cosson, Preston Martin, Shaun Peknic, and Leigh Silverman. His song and music video "Lost Boys" was a finalist at the 2016 Los Angeles Music Video Awards and a semi-finalist in the 2017 International Music Video Awards in Paris. His adaptation of Romeo and Juliet with Psittacus Productions was produced by Lincoln Center Education. He worked with Elizabeth Swados on many of her projects, including the NYU Reality Show.

American Songbook

In 1998 Lincoln Center launched American Songbook, dedicated to the celebration of popular American song. Designed to highlight and affirm the creative mastery of America's songwriters from their emergence at the turn of the 19th century up through the present, American Songbook spans all styles and genres, from the form's early roots in Tin Pan Alley and Broadway to the eclecticism of today's singer-songwriters. American Songbook also showcases the outstanding interpreters of popular song, including established and emerging concert, cabaret, theater, and songwriter performers.

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Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts (LCPA) serves three primary roles: presenter of artistic programming, national leader in arts and education and community relations, and manager of the Lincoln Center campus. A presenter of more than 3,000 free and ticketed events, performances, tours, and educational activities annually, LCPA offers 15 programs, series, and festivals including American Songbook, Great Performers, Lincoln Center Festival, Lincoln Center Out of Doors, Midsummer Night Swing, the Mostly Mozart Festival, and the White Light Festival, as well as the Emmy Award—winning *Live From Lincoln Center*, which airs nationally on PBS. As manager of the Lincoln Center campus, LCPA provides support and services for the Lincoln Center complex and the 11 resident organizations. In addition, LCPA led a \$1.2 billion campus renovation, completed in October 2012.

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For The Songs of Elizabeth Swados

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Matt Berman

Matt Berman is the resident lighting designer for Lincoln Center's American Songbook. He most recently designed the lighting for Kristin Chenoweth's My Love Letter to Broadway at the Lunt-Fontanne Theatre, and for "Meow Meow's Pandemonium" with the London Philharmonic Orchestra and Thomas Lauderdale of Pink Martini at Royal Festival Hall. Mr. Berman continues his design work for Chenoweth, Liza Minnelli, Alan Cumming, Meow Meow, Brian Stokes Mitchell, and Elaine Paige on the road. Through his work with ASCAP and several U.S.-based charities, he has designed for a starry roster that includes Bernadette Peters, Barbra Streisand, Reba McEntire, Melissa Errico, Deborah Voigt, Michael Urie, Stevie Wonder, India. Arie, Garth Brooks, Billy Joel, and Sting. His international touring schedule has allowed him to design for iconic venues such as Royal Albert Hall, Paris Opera, Royal Theatre Carré in Amsterdam, the Sporting Club in Monte Carlo, the Acropolis, the famed amphitheater in Taormina, Sicily, as well as Luna Park in Buenos Aires, and the Sydney Opera House. Closer to home, he has done work for the Hollywood Bowl, Alice Tully Hall, and Carnegie Hall. Other Broadway credits include the Tony Award-winning Liza's at the Palace, Bea Arthur on Broadway at the Booth Theatre, Nancy LaMott's Just in Time for Christmas, and Kathy Griffin Wants a Tony at the Belasco Theater.

Scott Stauffer

Scott Stauffer has been the sound designer for Lincoln Center's American Songbook since 1999. His Broadway design credits include *A Free Man of Color, The Rivals, Contact* (also in London and Tokyo), *Marie Christine, Twelfth Night,* and *Jekyll & Hyde.* Off-Broadway Mr. Stauffer has worked on *Subverted, Promises, Hereafter, A Minister's Wife, Bernarda Alba, Third, Belle Epoque, Big Bill, Elegies, Hello Again, The Spitfire Grill, Pageant, and Hedwig and the Angry Inch.* His regional credits include productions at the Capitol Repertory Theatre, University of Michigan, Hanger Theatre, Berkshire Theatre Festival, Chicago Shakespeare Theater, and Alley Theatre. His concert credits include many Lincoln Center galas, as well as the Actors Fund concerts of *Frank Loesser, Broadway 101, Hair,* and *On the Twentieth Century.* At Carnegie Hall he has worked with Chita Rivera and Brian Stokes Mitchell. As a sound engineer, Mr. Stauffer has worked on *The Lion King, Juan Darién, Chronicle of a Death Foretold, Carousel, Once on This Island,* and the original *Little Shop of Horrors.*