

ON THE TOWN

This Week

Edited by Sara Bonisteel

A MODERN MONSTER AND HIS EVIL LEGACY

Frozen is not the sci-fi movie about the ice age descending on New York. It's much more chilling than that.

This is Bryony Lavery's play about the kidnapping and murder of a 10-year-old girl and its impact on three individuals: Nancy (the child's mother), Agnetha (an American psychologist who is studying serial killers), and Ralph (the murderer).

The English work had its New York premiere at MCC Theater last March, and fortunately the entire production has moved uptown to Circle in the Square (1633 Broadway).

Under the assured direction of Doug Hughes, there are three unforgettable performances: Swoozie Kurtz, one of the most adept comic actresses, here in the demanding role of the English mother whose mood, over a period of years, goes from grief to anger to forgiveness.

Laila Robins is Agnetha, struggling with her own messy private life while studying the causes of Ralph's conduct — eliciting his childhood history and subjecting him to various physical and mental tests.

As the killer, Brian F. O'Byrne is pathetic, scary, and occasionally funny, closer to Peter Lorre in *M* than the flamboyant Hannibal Lecter.

Much of the play, set on an almost bare stage, is presented in monologues, but the characters interact in a few scenes. The most memorable is the mother's prison confrontation with the murderer.

According to the *Playbill*, Lavery, an English playwright, has penned more than 15 plays. If *Frozen* is any indication of the quality, then the others should move to the top of the import list. —Barry Bassis

MAAZEL'S 2ND YEAR AT PHIL WRAPS UP W/ BANG

Lorin Maazel's second season at the helm of the New York Philharmonic (newyorkphilharmonic.org) ends with a flourish.

After leading the orchestra in a program of Tchaikovsky's beloved Pathétique Symphony, Scriabin's Poem of Ecstasy, and Rachmaninoff's Fourth Piano Concerto (with soloist Yefim Bronfman) this past week — with a final performance June 8 — Maazel and

WEEGEE'S PHOTOS OF SEEDY NEW YORK AT UBU

"2 Murders, \$35.00" states an invoice made out to Time, Inc. New York City, presumably photographer Weegee's fee for two of his ubiquitous crime-scene pictures.



Close-up of 'In the Paddy Wagon': On view in Midtown

This clever photograph, titled "Murder Was My Business," reflects the tone of Weegee's photojournalistic work represented by the collection of 220-plus photographs on display at Ubu Gallery (416 E. 59th St., 212-753-4444, ubugallery.com) through July 23 in "Weegee's Story," the final stop on a four-year international museum tour.

Weegee (the nickname refers to Usher Fellig's start as a photo lab squeegee boy and/or the popular board game) was a child of the Lower East Side who first achieved fame in the Depression era with his shots of all

varieties of crime, misfortune, and oddity that routinely made the covers of Gotham's many tabloids.

His uncanny ability for being among the first at a crime scene helped him attain his status as the unofficial photographer of the NYPD, a position that got him access to the police radio that further aided his self-proclaimed mission to capture the dark side of urban life.

Though principally a photojournalist, Weegee's skillful composition and technique gained him entrance into the collection of the Museum of Modern Art in 1943, and to this day he retains a place of high esteem by many prestigious admirers, including the late Andy Warhol.

This is not coincidence. Weegee's work aptly surmises the nascent relationship of the viewer with the sensationalistic image that grew to be a source of inspiration for Warhol.

When viewed en masse, his images of criminals, transvestites, severed heads, and underprivileged kids all carry the same weight — or lack thereof. The victims and heroes grow familiar from repetition.

The same corpses and derelicts appear over and over in the densely packed gallery. This installation underscores the inundation of gruesome images on the public today and its consequent numbing effect.

—Jenny Doussan

company return June 10-12 with another enticing program mixing old and new.

Robert Schumann's Symphony No. 2, not played nearly as often as his famous Spring Symphony, is nevertheless the composer's grandest symphonic work. Sergei Prokofiev's Second Violin Concerto is undeniably thrilling when performed by the world's most virtuosic players, and soloist Gil Shaham certainly fills the bill.

Opening the concerts is the world premiere of a New York Philharmonic commission from Dutch composer Poul Ruders, *Final Nightshade*.

And that's not all, folks. The orchestra wraps up its season June 16-19 with one of the truly awesome musical

statements — the massive Third Symphony of Gustav Mahler, which utilizes the vocal talents of contralto Anna Larsson, the American Boychoir, and the women of the Westminster Symphonic Choir. It's sure to be an appropriately outsized grand finale at Avery Fisher Hall. —Kevin Filipksi

POETS HOUSE SAUNTERS OVER BROOKLYN BRIDGE

On June 14, Poets House (212-431-7920, poetshouse.org), the organization responsible for Spring Street's 40,000-volume poetry library, presents its ninth annual Poetry Walk Across the Brooklyn Bridge.

"The Bridge Walk is one of our signature events," said Lee Briccetti, executive director of Poets House. "It helps us celebrate the city we love and celebrate the transformative power of poetry."

Actor Bill Murray, former U.S. poet laureate Billy Collins, as well as Manhattan and Brooklyn borough presidents C. Virginia Fields and Marty Markowitz will join scores of poetry enthusiasts in a stroll above the river.

Periodic stops will allow for the recitation of bridge-themed poetry as the group enjoys a panorama of New York's poetic landscape. Giving new meaning to the phrase "poetry in motion," the procession begins at City Hall, crosses the bridge, and concludes with a dinner in DUMBO, the emerging riverfront bohemian community.

"You're trotting through this place where many poets have lived," Briccetti said.

Dinner festivities will include Robert Bly's receipt of the Elizabeth Kray Award for Service to Poetry. The award, named for the late director of the American Academy of Poets and cofounder of Poets House, is the association's highest honor. —Trevor Boggs

THREE DANCE DEBUTS AT SYMPHONY SPACE

Hip-hop meets ballet at Symphony Space (2537 Broadway, 212-864-5400, symphonyspace.org) as the Chamber Dance Project debuts the latest work by



Chamber Dance Project: Shows new moves

choreographer Victor Quijada on June 8, 10, and 11.

Vivaldi provides the music for Quijada's *I Said No But You Forgot*, one of three premieres. The company will also perform two new works, *Shiver* and *Against the Dying of the Light*, by its artistic director, Diane Coburn Bruning. More information on the company is available at chamberdance.org. ■