

The Arts

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MONDAY, MARCH 29, 1999

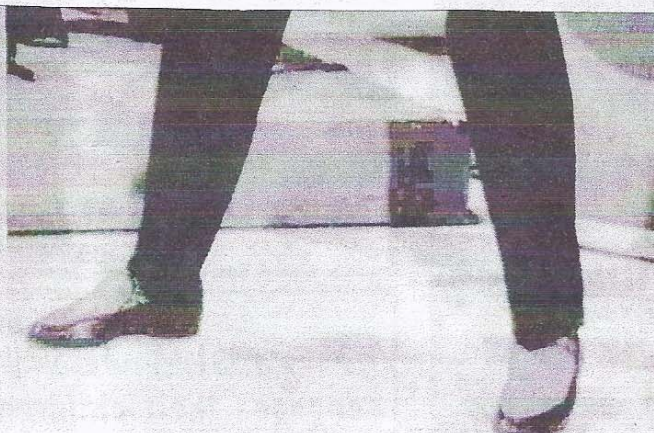
The New York Times

News president and
deputy. All the people
of World War I

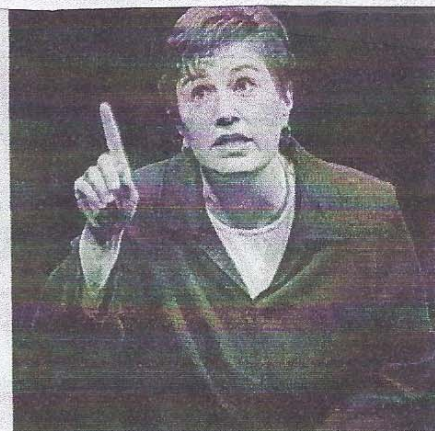
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ge 4



Associated Press



Sara Krulwich/The New York Times

Solo: Lisa Kron in "2.5 Minute Ride."

Footlights



neighbors into your
bedroom. Nervous
breakdowns must
have been around
since the Renais-
sance. The more we
change, the more we
stay the same." In-
formation: 011-44-
171-930-8800.

High Hopes

The comedian **Robert Klein** will serve as
host tonight when the singers Denyce
Graves, David Garrison and David A. Dor-
sey perform at the Merkin Concert Hall in
"Music and Friends, an Intimate Concert to
Benefit the Harlem School of the Arts." Also
performing will be students from the school,
founded 35 years ago for aspiring artists
from minorities. Proceeds will match a

\$70,000 grant from the Hayden Foundation
for a scholarship program in the arts for
students ages 11 to 15. Information:
(212) 926-4100, extension 306.

A Player's Life

Dame Judi Dench's busy calendar is getting
fuller. Besides March 21 (accept Academy
Award for best supporting actress) and
April 3 (open at the Barrymore Theater in
David Hare's "Amy's View"), there is May
17 (accept the the Shakespeare Guild's Giel-
gud Award for Excellence in Dramatic Arts
at the Barrymore). With Robert MacNeil as
host, the presentation by last year's recipi-
ent, Zoe Caldwell, also celebrates the 435th
birthday of Shakespeare, and the 95th birth-
day of Mr. Gielgud. Information: (212) 685-
1095.

LAWRENCE VAN GELDER

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Celeste Holm

Her peers on stage love 'Judi'

NEW YORK

Squads of cheering fans outside the stage door. A program made up of some of contemporary drama's greatest names. A week-day reception that goes on past midnight. And an articulate guest of honor who appears almost speechless when accepting her award.

They do theater galas differently in New York.

Of course, if the honoree is Academy Award-winning actress **Judi Dench** (officially "Dame Judi" back home in England) appearing on the set of her Broadway hit "Amy's View" and the beneficiary is Washington's own Shakespeare Guild, founded in 1987 by scholar **John Andrews**, you expect the unusual.

Add to that a sold-out house that included such people as **Celeste Holm**, **Hume Cronyn**, **Robert Whitehead**, **Louis Auchincloss** and **Dominick Dunne**, and the unusual becomes normal. Such was Monday's "Night for the Love of Shakespeare: A Festive Salute to Dame Judi Dench" in New York's Ethel Barrymore Theatre, followed by a party in the Supper Club across the Street.

Mr. Andrews made a leap of faith when his group — dedicated to cultivating appreciation of the Bard — decided to go out of town for the annual presentation of its Golden Quill, also known as the Sir John Gielgud Award for Excellence in the Dramatic Arts. The award itself is a fresh ly cast, outsized bronze quill by Washington sculptor **John Safer**, who was present with his wife, **Joy**.

see GUILD, page C15

THE WASHINGTON TIMES



Dame Judi Dench gets a warm embrace from fellow actress Zoe Caldwell after being honored at the Shakespeare Guild awards program in New York.

Photos by Mia M. Matheson/Special to The Washington Times

GUILD

From page C14

"For one thing, if you need an actor, you just go across the street," Mr. Andrews said half-jokingly about the reasons for choosing a glitzy new venue. "We've managed to make the event more of a family affair."

Program speakers included **Hal Holbrook**, who called himself the token Yankee among such British-born theatrical lights as **Christopher Plummer**, **Brian Bedford**, **Sir David Hare** and **Sir Richard Eyre** offering effusive tributes to their friend and colleague, Miss Dench. Mr. Bedford came in from Stratford, Ontario, for the occasion; Mr. Eyre came from London and Mr. Holbrook from rehearsals in Washington for "Merchant of Venice," opening here June 1.

National Endowment for the Arts Chairman **William Ivey** sent a personal message of congratulations, as did Britain's culture minister, **Chris Smith**.

Broadway producer **Harold Prince** and **John Gielgud**, now 95, who sent especially witty words from England's Buckinghamshire. "Every time [Mr. Andrews] has one of these events, my heart sinks because I think it will be a failure," said Washington Shakespeare fan and guild patron **Robert Linowes** of the ambitious program. "But it never is."

The event was held in conjunction with New York's Shakespeare Society and the Chicago Shakespeare Theater, among others.



Hume Cronyn (left) greets Patsy Preston as theater producer Robert Whitehead looks on.



Christopher Plummer was one of the hosts.

Another practical point of difference was the stipulation "business attire." Mr. Linowes, alone in black-tie garb, said, "I figure I can always get a job waiting tables afterward."

"Now all the world is in love with Will, and look at the respect this mere writer is getting in Hollywood," noted the evening's host, **Robert MacNeil**,

by way of praising guild efforts. The audience laughed and applauded loudly, setting a tone that was upbeat all the way.

"In life as in work, she always acts well. She also has that indispensable actor's gift of stoicism," Mr. Eyre said of Miss Dench. Mr. Bedford did a parody of the Bottom character in "A Midsummer Night's Dream," and several others — including Dame **Maggie Smith's** son **Toby Stephens** — recited love sonnets. Excerpts of Miss Dench in her film roles were shown on a screen.

"Every time she plays the role she defines it for our time, and now the movies have found her, and that is dangerous," said presenter and former awardee **Zoe Caldwell**. "She has garnered enough praises to open her own department at Bloomingdale's."

"I'm very very bad about speaking in public," Miss Dench said in accepting the quill statuette, adding several sentences later that in her family, "William Shakespeare was known as the man who pays the rent."

— Ann Geracimos

THE WASHINGTON TIMES

Q Why did Benjamin Bratt leave *Law & Order*? What are his plans, professionally and with his main squeeze, Julia Roberts?—Delia Lucas, Los Angeles, Calif.

A A few months ago, Bratt, 35, told *Law & Order* creator Dick Wolfe that he was tired of playing the same character for four years and wanted to stretch his acting skills by doing films. Wolfe wished him well, and they parted as friends. Since then, Bratt has worked with Madonna and Rupert Everett on *The Next Best Thing*, directed by John Schlesinger, and *The Last Producer*, starring and directed by Burt Reynolds. He and Roberts, 31, are as romantic as ever but appear in no rush to tie the knot.

Q Pop singers like Mariah Carey and Celine Dion have been promoting themselves as "divas." Aren't they taking liberties with that word? I've always considered divas to be opera stars like Maria Callas.—Cliff Hollenbeck, Seattle, Wash.

A Strictly speaking, they are. The Italian word *diva* derives from the Latin term for "goddess" and usually is applied to a distinguished female opera star. But lately it has come to be used for any demanding female singing star. By this standard, Carey and Dion qualify as divas.



Bradley: Long shot

Q Bill Bradley looks like a guy who could win the Presidency for the Democrats. In your opinion, what are his chances?—Carlos Gonzalez, New York, N.Y.

A Some polls indicate that the former New Jersey Senator has a better chance than Al Gore to beat the GOP front-runner, Gov. George W. Bush of Texas, but this has little bearing on who'll win the nomination in 2000. Presidential primaries are poorly attended by rank-and-file voters, giving a big advantage to Gore, who controls his party's political machine and can bring out the vote in his favor. Unless Bradley can persuade Democratic regulars to back him as the more likely winner, his chances look slim.



Julia and Ben: Still making eyes—but making no move toward the altar

Q Why is Judi Dench always being nominated for awards? I don't see anything extraordinary about her often wooden performances.—Ian Douglas, Del City, Okla.

A You're in the minority in assessing the lady's talents. Dame Judi Dench, 64, was recognized by her peers in March with an Oscar for her scene-stealing role as Queen Elizabeth in *Shakespeare in Love* and with a Tony last month for *Amy's View*. In between, she received the Sir John Gielgud Award for Excellence in the Dramatic Arts from The Shakespeare Guild, and such luminaries as playwright David Hare and actors Christopher Plummer and Zoe Caldwell praised her technique and natural instinct. When we caught Dench on Broadway as a flamboyant stage actress in *Amy's View*, we were impressed by how she radiated a kind of beauty that transcended her physical attributes.

Walter Scott's Personality Parade



Dame Judi in *Amy's View*, which put a Tony on the shelf next to her Oscar

Q I'm smitten by the three beautiful sisters in the hot Irish singing group The Corrs, who blend pop rock with traditional Celtic sounds. How do they get along? And are there any more like them at home?—F.B., Bethlehem, Pa.

A "There are no siblings left at home, thank goodness," says Sharon Corrs, 29, oldest of the singing sisters. (The group also includes Caroline, 25, and Andrea, 24, plus big brother Jim, 35.) Their parents also were popular musicians in their hometown of Dundalk, on Ireland's east coast. "We always make an effort to get along, because we're cocooned together so much," adds Sharon. The Corrs are in Dublin this summer, working on a new CD for fall release and hoping it will be as successful as their first two discs—*Forgotten and Talk on Corners*. By the way, both Sharon and Caroline have a steady beau; Jim and Andrea live alone.



The Corrs—Sharon, Andrea, Caroline and Jim (l-r)—who mix rock with Celtic sounds

Q In the credits at the end of each *Dharma & Greg*, there's a paragraph that goes by too quickly for me to read. I've been going nuts trying to figure what it says. Can you help?—Mary Miller, Toledo, Ohio

A Chuck Lorre, the co-creator and producer of ABC's *Dharma & Greg*, calls those brief paragraphs "vanity cards" because they express his personal feelings. "I figured I'd use my two seconds of screen time each week to reveal in my opinions and philosophy," he tells us. Sometimes the paragraph even contains a short story with recurring characters. Lorre says he hopes viewers will tape the show and then hit the pause button on their VCR to read the paragraph. You can read 36 of the vanity cards at www.henrysworld.com, a fan's site on the Web.

Q Baseball slugger Darryl Strawberry's arrest for soliciting a prostitute in Florida was just the latest news about famous men and their sexual misconduct. Are athletes, actors and politicians more likely to have sexual problems than other people?—J.J., New Hope, Pa.

A No. Experts estimate that more than 20% of America's adult male population suffers from "sexual addiction" to some degree. "Such acting out is an intimacy problem reflecting the man's inability to think of a woman as a whole person rather than as a fantasy object," says Dr. Douglas Weiss, who runs the Heart to Heart Counseling Center in Fort Worth, Tex. (www.sexaddict.com). Fame, power and fortune merely afford celebrities more opportunity than the average guy to meet willing partners. Like other forms of addiction, there are programs for those trying to kick the "habit." But one recovering sex addict in showbiz told us: "Unlike AA, which has acquired a certain cachet, Sexaholics Anonymous may be the only 12-step program that's not glamorous, even in Hollywood."



Darryl with wife, Charisse, in May after pleading "no contest" to charges: Just a typical male?

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