

# The Arts

## The New York Times

### This Week



#### New Surroundings

In the completion of a three-year, \$24 million renovation, fully refurbished galleries in the Centre Street Building at the Walters Art Museum in Baltimore reopened yesterday with a reinstallation that traces major developments in 19th-century

European and American art and features a Grand Salon inspired by the 1884 paintings gallery of one of the museum's founders, William T. Walters. The exhibition, "A Magnificent Age: The Walters's 19th-Century Collection," begins with Neo-Classicism and Romanticism and moves on to landscapes and realism in rural and ur-

ban life, as well as other depictions and styles, including Impressionism. Among the artists are Gérôme, Cassatt, Corot, David, Degas, Delacroix, Daumier, Durand, Ingres, Manet, Millet, Monet, Pissarro, Rousseau and Gilbert Stuart. Information: (410) 547-9000.

#### Players

In ceremonies at 8 tonight at Alice Tully Hall, Kevin Kline will become the first American to receive the Golden Quill, symbol of the Sir John Gielgud Award for Excellence in the Dramatic Arts. Established by the Washington-based Shakespeare Guild, the prize has been awarded previously to Ian McKellen, Derek Jacobi, Zoe Caldwell, Judi Dench and Kenneth Branagh. Tony Randall is to serve as host of tonight's program of Shakespearean vignettes, anecdotes and tributes. Among other scheduled participants are John Cleese, Kitty Carlisle



Hart, Bill Irwin, Dana Ivey and Roger Rees. Information: (212) 721-6500.

#### Klimt's Nature

Perhaps best known for his lush, erotic fe-

male figures, the Austrian artist Gustav Klimt (1862-1918) also applied his exotic style to landscapes. Orchards, woods, gardens and villas around Attersee, a lake near Salzburg where he spent many vacations, were among his favorite subjects. A dozen of Klimt's large, mosaiclike paintings, little known outside Austria, are featured in "Gustav Klimt Landscapes" at the Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute in Williamstown, Mass. The show, through Sept. 2, is accompanied by three exhibitions of art, design and furnishings that focus on cultur-

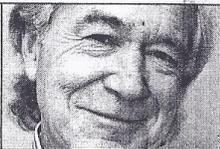
al change in Vienna in the 18th and 19th centuries. Information: (413) 458-2303.

#### Star Attraction

In the lineup are Frank Sinatra, Gene Kelly, James Stewart, Doris Day, Henry Fonda and Lana Turner. In films like "On the Town," "The Man Who Knew Too Much," "The Grapes of Wrath" and "The Postman Always Rings Twice," they will shed their starlight from a 20-foot high, 48-foot wide screen beginning at sunset tonight, when the HBO Bryant Park Summer Film Festival returns. The 10 free Monday evening film shows (Tuesday is the rain date) continue through Aug. 19. Schedule permitting, Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg will be on hand tonight along with Ann Miller, a star of the opening attraction, "On the Town" (1949), with Sinatra and Kelly. Information: (212) 512-5700.

LAWRENCE VAN GELDER

## Neal Travis



### Not ready for prime time

THE New York Times, like an 800-pound gorilla, is used to getting its way. But it would seem that The Old Gray Lady still isn't ready for prime-time TV.

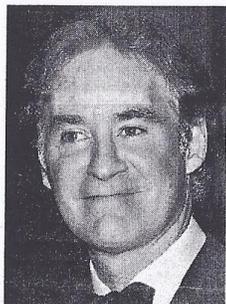
When young Arthur Sulzberger, who believes in the biz-school mantra of "expand your brand," took over as publisher several years ago, one of the grand plans he had for the Times was a prestigious half hour of news to go out over the public TV system at 11 o'clock every night. (The prospect was quite alarming to manufacturers of sleeping tablets.)

The venture was to have a budget of some \$14 million a year, would be produced by MacNeill/Lehrer and would showcase the tweedy types who labor in the Times' far-flung bureaus. (With the honorable exception of the glorious Maureen Dowd, most Times people, like print journalists everywhere, are better to read than watch.)

The project is now more than 18 months behind schedule and PBS sources say it's probably not going to happen. Corporate sponsors apparently couldn't see why they should pick up the tax for what would be a showcase for the Times. The paper's p.r. department will only say that there's nothing to report on the project just now.

Another factor in the apparent abandonment of the scheme may be the switch in executive editors. The now-departed Joe Lelyveld was very keen and even brought Michael Oreskes back from his D.C. bureau chief's office to ramrod the show. But Lelyveld's successor, Howell Raines, is said to be cool to the whole idea. Raines has just completed the painful task of breaking up his paper's fiefdoms and the last thing he would seem to need is a bunch of his writers squabbling over face-time as they try and become multi-media stars.

## Brit drama award for actor Kevin Kline

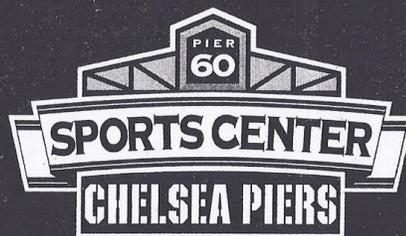


A well-deserved honor for Kevin Kline (right) tonight, when the versatile actor becomes the first American to ever win the Sir John Gielgud award for excellence in the dramatic arts.

Kevin, who joins the company of such as Sir Ian McKellen, Sir Derek Jacobi, Dame Judi Dench and Sir Kenneth Branagh, gets his honor at the Shakespeare Guild Golden Quill gala.

Araldo Magnani/Getty Images

Does your summer share have a sun deck? A pool? A rock wall? A spa? (If it does, you're already a member.)



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# Kevin Kline Receives the 2002 Gielgud Award at Lincoln Center

*John Cleese, Kitty Carlisle Hart, Tony Randall, And Roger Rees Highlight A SHAKESPEAREAN REVEL*

ON MONDAY NIGHT, JUNE 17, during a ceremony that turned out to be part toast and part roast, KEVIN KLINE became the first American to be lauded in the name of an artist who has been called “the patron saint of purity in acting.”

Serving as master of the revels for a sprightly gala at LINCOLN CENTER’S ALICE TULLY HALL was the inimitable TONY RANDALL, who’d come to the Folger Shakespeare Library in April of 1994 to celebrate the ninetieth birthday of Sir JOHN GIELGUD and help unveil a trophy that would preserve the actor’s legacy “with golden quill” (Sonnet 85). Also on hand for the gathering was cultural leader KITTY CARLISLE HART, who’d served from the outset on a lustrous panel that selects worthy recipients for JOHN SAFER’s gleaming sculpture. As she bestowed the *Golden Quill* on its 2002 laureate, Mrs. Hart remembered her long friendship with Sir John and said how pleased she was to welcome Mr. Kline to a circle that included such luminaries as Sir IAN MCKELLEN (1996), Sir DEREK JACOBI (1997), ZOE CALDWELL (1998), Dame JUDI DENCH (1999), and KENNETH BRANAGH (2000).

MR. RANDALL set the tone for a festive occasion with charming anecdotes about Gielgud, who’d blessed him with one of his famous “bricks” (unintended insults), and about actor John Neville, who’d been congratulated by the imperious Donald Wolfit for “a damn fine stab at Hamlet.” Mr. Randall said he’d recounted this incident to Mr. Kline on the opening night of his “utterly beautiful” rendering of the character, only to find that “Kevin was not in the least amused.”

RICHARD BROWN, a mainstay on *AMERICAN MOVIE CLASSICS*, surveyed the awardee’s varied film career and noted that one of the reasons for his consistent success is that “when he’s on the screen he’s unfailingly interesting.” Mr. Brown then introduced MARGOT HARLEY, who reminded everyone that Mr. Kline had arrived in Manhattan as a standout in the new Drama Division’s gifted inaugural class at JULLIARD. From there he’d proceeded to four formative seasons with THE ACTING COMPANY, which Ms. Harley and the late John Houseman had founded in 1972. She extolled him as an inspiration to young performers who seek to excel in the works of Shakespeare and other major dramatists, and she buttressed her tribute with a letter from one of his finest teachers, director MICHAEL KAHN, who marveled at his versatility,

commended him for marrying “the perfectly wonderful Phoebe” and becoming “a perfectly wonderful father,” and expressed the hope that he would draw from this “richly deserved award” a fresh incentive “to surprise, excite, and please us in the great roles for which he is so brilliantly suited.”

PICKING UP ON references to the honoree’s reputation as “Kevin Decline” and “Dr. No,” owing to all the proposals he weighs but rejects, BILL IRWIN, who’d acted with him in *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, read a message from MICHAEL HOFFMAN, the picture’s director. Satirizing Kline for his creative ways “to waste everyone’s time,” Hoffman talked about how, after delaying because he couldn’t figure out how to do Bottom, the



role he’d been offered, he finally came up with a scheme that would cast him not only as the eager Weaver but as Oberon and Theseus. “Which part of Bottom, I wondered, did he not understand?” Irwin urged Kevin to continue nurturing both his “sagacity and intelligence” and his “untoward instincts and weird impulses” and bring them to masterpieces like *King Lear*.

Similar notes were sounded by others, among them BERNARD GERSTEN, executive producer of LINCOLN CENTER THEATER, who described how a fed-up protagonist had emended a line from Chekhov to reproach a house full of coughing patrons during a production of *Ivanov*, BARRY EDELSTEIN, artistic director of CLASSIC STAGE COMPANY, who’d been impressed by Kline’s ability to immobilize a twitchy youth’s distracting front-row sneakers without interrupting an irritable Prince’s advice to the players, and actress DANA IVEY, who had portrayed Gertrude in that show and who seconded BLYTHE DANNER’s perception that engaging in stage dialogue “with Kevin Kline is like tossing balls through the air; you know the ball will always come to you, but you’re never quite sure how.”

A DAM GOPNIK, whose usual venue is *The New Yorker*, and whose function, he said, was to bring tedium to the proceedings, declared it fitting that Kline should be “the first man not born in dampness, and not for dampness made,” to win a GIELGUD honor, because he exemplifies the best aspects of a New World tradition that is at its most vigorous when figures such as Edwin Forrest, the Booths, Paul Robeson, and Orson Welles evoke the “extreme states” of mind and emotion to be explored in personalities such as Falstaff, Othello, and Richard II. He expressed relief that “this event does not mark an end, or a career accomplished in

any sense, but simply a beginning,” because “more than any actor of his generation in America, Kevin has taken up the challenge” of a heritage “that involves not just acting well, but understanding why acting matters at all.”

In a similar vein ROGER REES, who’d earned plaudits for Nicholas Nickleby and other leading roles with the Royal Shakespeare Company, saluted Kline’s royal Dane as one that had somehow managed to be “refined and audacious at the same moment.” This was possible, he said, only because an artist who refused to imitate earlier actors had devised an approach to Shakespearean verse that achieved a “moving point of perfection in the middle,” eschewing too much metrical art on the one hand, and too much raw passion on the other.



JOHN CLEESE whose self-appointed role was “to insult Mr. Kline,” would countenance none of this hyperbole, and he issued

a warning that he’d come “not to praise Kevin, but to bury him.” His friend’s “first mistake,” he maintained, was to listen to reviewers who’d accused him of overacting in *Sophie’s Choice*. In Cleese’s opinion, a “beautifully modulated” and “quiet” style that had evolved in response to this “critical bullshit” was “fucking boring.” So he implored Kline to heed the counsel he’d given while he was on the set as Otto in *A Fish Called Wanda*. “If anyone sees any signs of subtlety creeping in, shout out.” That, Cleese trumpeted, was the performance that had earned Kevin an Oscar. “And he *didn’t* win one for *The Ice Storm*.”

BY THE TIME he got to reply to these and other observations, with remarks he promised to keep “brief but tedious,” Mr. Kline said he’d never felt “so much love and naked jealousy.” All in all, he smiled, “This was my kind of night. And not because I’m an ego-maniac, which I am, but because I’m so insecure. I do need to be told ‘you have to do this.’” He admitted that he missed Joe Papp, who’d always provided strong guidance. And he thanked his wife for prodding him when he squandered time on material that was insufficiently significant.

He singled out HAROLD GUSKIN, his mentor from Indiana University, for showing him that “when you essay one of the great roles of Shakespeare, you don’t play that role, you just let it play you; you get out of its way, you submit yourself to it, and it will take you to amazing places.” He paid homage to his father, “who used to recite Shakespeare to me.”

And he said “I’d like to share this award with my fellow American actors, and particularly my fellow Shakespeareans. We are *not* separated from the English by a common language; Shakespeare is for all of us. And I hope that more Americans are recognized” in ways like this for their commitment to the classics.