

Chicago Tribune

Vivaldi, John Waters among Harris treats

2010-11 schedule

John von Rhein
Classical music critic

9:55 AM CDT, April 14, 2010

The Harris Theater for Music and Dance at Millennium Park has announced a high-profile season of music, dance and theater performances for 2010-11. Thirteen visiting artists and ensembles, arranged in three subscription series, will share the season with the venue's resident performing arts groups.

Heading the schedule of classical music events will be two instrumental ensembles led by violinist-conductors Robert McDuffie and Gidon Kremer.

McDuffie will direct the Venice Baroque Orchestra in a program Oct. 24 that pairs a period-instrument performance of Vivaldi's "The Four Seasons" with the Chicago premiere of Philip Glass' 2009 Violin Concerto No. 2, "The American Four Seasons." The Glass work, inspired by Vivaldi's masterpiece, employs modern instruments.

Kremer's ensemble, Kremerata Baltica, will make its Harris debut Nov. 6 with a program that includes works by Bartok and Schumann. Kremer and friends are appearing as part of the citywide Soviet Experience collaboration.

Rounding out the classical series will be a recital by Venezuelan pianist Gabriela Montero on Feb. 4; and an all-Baroque concert by the Canadian period instrument ensemble Les Violons du Roy, with Ian Bostridge as soloist, on May 6. The English tenor will present arias by Handel, Vivaldi and others under the group's artistic director, Bernard Labadie.

Tickets for 2010-11 Harris Theater Presents events will go on sale by series subscription on May 1. They are available at the box office, 205 E. Randolph Drive, or contact 312-334-7777 or harristheaterchicago.org.

Waters brings holiday cheer: For those who like their Christmases twisted, the creator of the likes of "Hairspray" and "Cry-Baby" will oblige Dec. 14 at Harris with a one-man show, improbably titled "A John Waters Christmas."

Also on the schedule for the theater season at the Harris, performance artist Laurie Anderson will return in 2011. Her musical portrait "Homeland" played in 2008; she'll return with "Delusion" on Jan. 11, a response to the post- 9/11 war on terror. And Alan Cumming will sing from his new album, "I Bought a Blue Car Today," on March 21. The Scotland-born performer was supposed to be starring in "Spider-Man" on Broadway by now, but that project has been delayed.

'Romeo' leads dance offerings: The biggest splash in the Harris' See the Dance 2010-11 series is likely to come from ever-innovative choreographer Mark Morris and his "Romeo and Juliet, On Motifs of Shakespeare." It's Morris' original take on the classic, including a happy ending and 20 extra minutes of Prokofiev's score unearthed by musicologist Simon Morrison. The Mark Morris Dance Group performs the 2008 full-length piece Feb. 25-27, accompanied by the Roosevelt University Chicago College of Performing Arts Symphony Orchestra.

The rest of the list consists of the Lar Lubovitch Dance Company Sept. 22-23; New York's Ballet Hispanico (its first appearance here since Luna Negra Dance Theater founder Eduardo Vilaro took over the troupe) Nov. 5; and the venerable collaborative troupe Pilobolus Dance Theatre Jan. 28-29. The Harris' schedule doesn't include local companies such as Hubbard Street Dance Chicago each season book the theater separately.

As a special event, co-presented with the Dance Center of Columbia College and the Museum of Contemporary Art, Sankai Juku, renowned practitioners of butoh, return with a full-length offering, "Hibiki: Resonance from Far Away," Oct. 20.

Tribune critic Chris Jones and Tribune special contributor Sid Smith contributed to this report.