

STANDING ROOM ONLY



« Horror-rock band **The Independents** performs at Fletcher's with So Damn Thirsty, The Attack and Ramrod. **Info:** 7 p.m.; Fletcher's, 701 S. Bond St., Baltimore; \$10; 410-558-1889.

JUST FOR LAUGHS



"The Comedy of Errors" is showing in Hampden this weekend. - Courtesy photo

Free-flowing comedy

By Dan Collins
Examiner Correspondent

Water is a running theme in director Ian Belknap's interpretation of "The Comedy of Errors," the fifth teen performance program at the Baltimore Shakespeare Festival.

"I, to the world, am like a drop of water," words Antipholus will lament in Act One, reverberate throughout the theater even before the curtain rises. Stage lights flash for lightning, a thunder soundtrack roars, and the rains come to Ephesus, carrying with them Aegeon (Nick Parlato), a man charged with the capital crime of being born of Syracuse.

It's a storm not unlike the one years earlier that tore Aegeon from his wife, Aemeila (Quilla Otto-Jacobs), landing her and her son, Antipholus, and his servant, Dromio, in Ephesus. Aegeon with his other son, a twin, also named Antipholus — and his servant, a twin, also named Dromio, return to Syracuse. The two sets of separated twins would lose memory of each other, setting the stage for a comedy of errors.

Soon, two sets of Antipholuses and Dromios are running loose on Ephesus, the former in white sailor caps and red flotation vests, the latter in blue swimmer skull caps and striped shirts, each unaware of the other and causing confusion with everyone they encounter.

Adrianna (Angelina Novak) can't understand why her husband doesn't seem to know he's married to her. Antipholus of Syr-

If you go

"The Comedy of Errors"

- » **Venue:** Baltimore Shakespeare Festival, 3900 Roland Ave., St. Mary's Outreach Center in Hampden
- » **When:** 8 p.m. Friday and Saturday, 5 p.m. Sunday
- » **Tickets:** \$10 to \$15.
- » **Info.:** 410-366-8596; baltimoreshakespeare.org

acuse (Noah Schechter) is sure Ephesus is an island of witches. And the Dromios are literally beside themselves, clueless why their masters are lashing them.

It's all a bit madcap with girls as guys — Julia Klavans is Antipholus of Ephesus; the "brothers" Dromio are more like sisters, Sarah Arroyo and Rebecca Etzine. A guy as girls — Nick DiGregorio, his black hair sticking out beneath his blond wig, plays the "spherical" kitchen wench, Nell. Umbrellas substitute for swords and everyone's dressed like the Morton's Fisherman.

The 16-member cast, representing 10 high schools, do a wonderful job of delivering their lines with comic timing and vaudevillian stumbles, falls, winks and nods.

Like a drop of water in the sea, Antipholus mourns that he will "lose myself," but of course, he finds himself — literally — in his twin, as do the brothers Dromio. By play's end, all are gathered, confusion lifts, Aegeon is reunited with his family and freed from the hangman's noose.

A soulful symphony

By Marie Gullard
Examiner Correspondent

Darin Atwater has no intention of reinventing the musical wheel. But in true explorative style, the founder and creative director of Soulful Symphony maintains that "it is not uncommon for an artist to take a classical piece and transpose it into a jazz idiom, or what's called 'raggin' up the classics.'"

Case in point — "Soulful Symphony: Fresh Winds."

This critically acclaimed African-American ensemble will present a program that features Edvard Grieg's "Peer Gynt Suite No. 1," coupled with Duke Ellington's jazz arrangement of the same work. Also included in the evening's repertoire is David Baker's "Jazz Suite for Clarinet and Orchestra," with

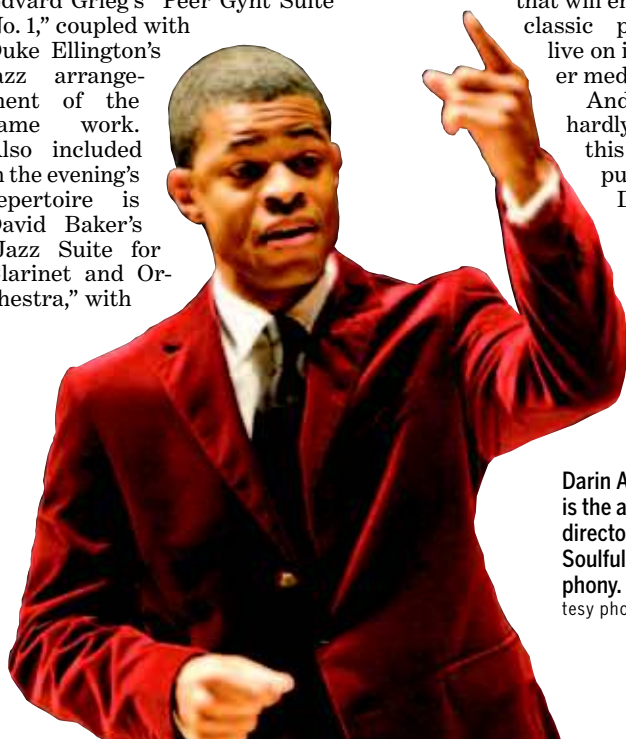
clarinetist Nicholas Lewis, and the premiere of Atwater's arrangement of Ravel's "Pavane pour une Infante defunte."

"I have the most respect for the [Pavane]," said Atwater, himself an accomplished pianist who will conduct the 75-piece ensemble from the keyboard. "I will just be filtering [this] very melodic piece into a different language."

The different language is that of the big-band orchestra with the use of a full saxophone complement, drums and a vibraphone. Having just completed his "Pavane" a month ago, it is Atwater's intention to bring to its premier the African-American experience

that will enable the classic piece to live on in another medium.

And he is hardly alone in this august pursuit, as Duke Ellington himself was a m a s t e r



Darin Atwater is the artistic director of a Soulful Symphony. - Courtesy photo

If you go

"Soulful Symphony: Fresh Winds"

- » **Venue:** The Music Center, 5301 Tuckerman Lane, North Bethesda
- » **When:** 8:00 p.m. Thursday
- » **Venue:** Joseph Meyerhoff Symphony Hall, 1212 Cathedral St., Baltimore
- » **When:** 8 p.m. Friday
- » **Tickets:** \$15 to \$55
- » **More Info:** 410-783-8000, bsomusic.org

of blending classical and jazz idioms.

In pairing Ellington's version of the "Peer Gynt Suite" alongside Grieg's masterpiece, Atwater's desire lies in giving a whole new audience the opportunity to hear both arrangements and learn how they were brought about.

In the same spirit, Nicholas Lewis, on clarinet, approaches the "Three Ethnic Dances" of David Baker's "Jazz Suite" with the vitality of a bear going after his supper.

"This piece is wonderful," Lewis said. "It gives the performer a lot of latitude for expression, a chance to go off script [and] to improvise within the spirit of the times, as Mozart did."

WEEKLY SPECIALS HAVE CHANGED

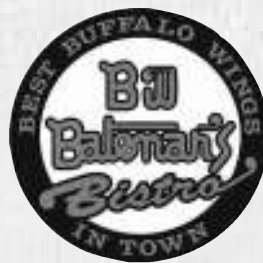
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