

Kristen Stewart rues affair with "Huntsman" director. **SideShow, C2**

Supermodels reminisce in HBO's "About Face." **C2**

Thursday, July 26, 2012 ★ Section C

Review Music

Playing with ideas through the music

By Peter Dobrin
INQUIRER MUSIC CRITIC

What is, musically speaking, Manfred Honeck's deepest wish?

Tuesday night at the Mann Center with the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, heady interpretive ideas sprang from virgin canvas. What you thought you knew about Tchaikovsky's *Symphony No. 5* wasn't

quite there anymore. Tempos switched like the wind. Phrases once merely broadly noble were now finely etched. After an evening of three programmed works and two encores — five composers — Honeck's ambition for illuminating scores anew both startled and pleased.

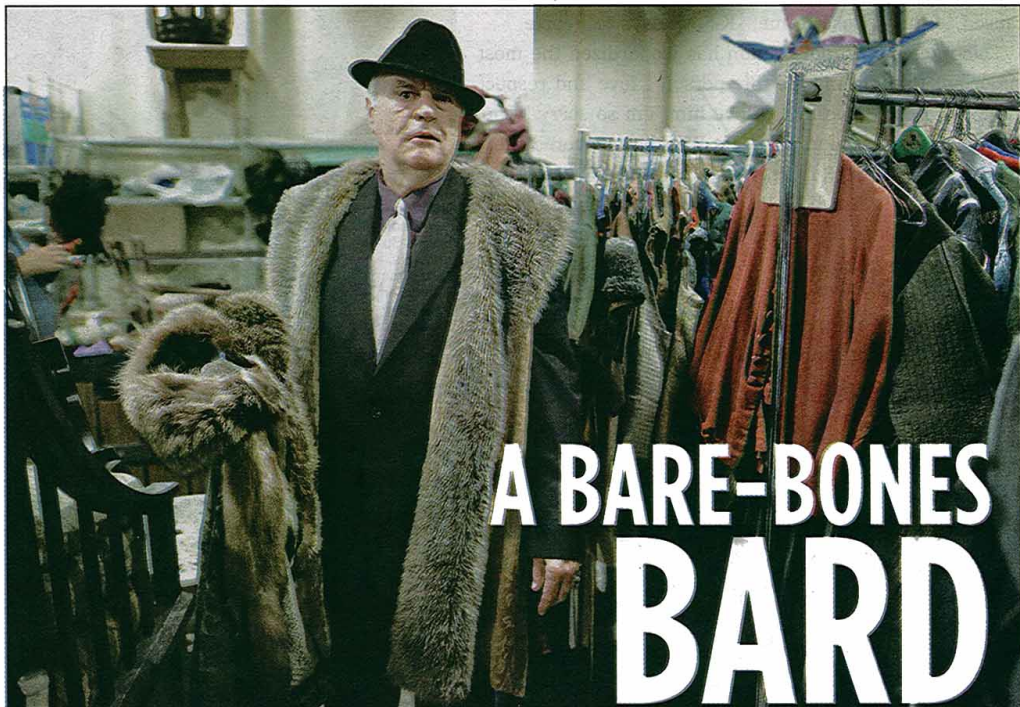


Manfred Honeck has since 2008 led Pittsburgh's ensemble.

Among podium travelers right now, a good number of individualists flourish. Jaap van Zweden and Vladimir Jurowski come to mind most immediately, and Honeck, 53, an Austrian violinist and violist who became Pittsburgh's music director in 2008, is firmly of that school.

There's a line, however, that separates revelation from random acts of quirkiness — it's a clearly drawn one, actually — and it turns out there's nothing impetuous in Honeck's approach. Tempo changes, even ones that seize the narrative suddenly, are rationalized by where the music is going long-term. Material gets the same treatment when it's repeated later in a movement. Over time, connections are made, story lines established.

It means everything that Honeck See **PITTSBURGH** on C3



A BARE-BONES BARD



Dave Scheffler, top, who plays the Duke of Austria, finds his costume, and Leah Poyo (Blanche) searches for hers in a storage closet. LAURENCE KESTERSON / For The Inquirer

Theater

King John

Through Aug. 5 at the Pennsylvania Shakespeare Festival, DeSales University, 2755 Station Ave., Center Valley, Pa. (near Quakertown). Tickets: \$25-\$32. Information: 610-282-9455 or www.pashakespeare.org.

"King John" will be staged in the Pennsylvania Shakespeare Festival much as it was back in the day — sans director, scenic or sound designer, or any modern "frill."

By Howard Shapiro
INQUIRER STAFF WRITER

Lord, what fools these mortals be!" Shakespeare writes in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and given how he operated in the theater of his day, he could have been referring to the way plays are done today. A costume designer!? Whoever heard of such a thing? Someone to plan ... what is that word ... lighting? Preposterous! And what is this director? Another foolish piece of nonsense, methinks.

The theater now has plenty of, as producers say, "creative-team members," but even the idea of a director would have been foreign before the 19th century. So it's an act of professional courage (plus a declaration of machismo) that the 17 cast members of *King John*, which opens Friday at



Greg Wood wears his crown as King John.

the Pennsylvania Shakespeare Festival near Quakertown, signed on to do the play the way they did it back then.

No director. No scenic designer. No lighting master. Certainly no sound designer. See **KING JOHN** on C4



Evan Schiff will be part of the Olympics' opening ceremony.

Keeping an Olympics secret

By Jonathan Lai
FOR THE INQUIRER

In today's social-media world, how do you get 60,000 guests to sit through a dress rehearsal for one of the year's largest and most anticipated performances without revealing any secrets?

For Danny Boyle, the answer was simple: Start your own social-media

campaign.

That campaign was to become part of Philly native Evan Schiff's life.

Boyle, the Oscar-winning director of *Slumdog Millionaire* and *127 Hours*, has been directing Friday's opening ceremony for the Summer Olympic Games in London. At Monday's dress rehearsal, the first in front of a live See **SCHIFF** on C5

A Phila. native has a role, but is mum on details.

The word is art everywhere

Megawords, a project of two Philadelphians, gets a mega-boost with a Pew fellowship.

By Jonathan Lai
FOR THE INQUIRER

Megawords. It's a mega-word. It's two Philly artists engaged since 2005 in a long-running "experimental media project."

Which is what, exactly? A whirlwind world of art installations, projects, and events. An abandoned newsstand, converted to distribute their magazines. An old storefront, turned into an artistic event space. The future may bring films, Web stuff, apps. At the heart, there's a print magazine that comes out at least twice a year and does unprecedented things.

Megawords is its own mega-world — a world that has come to a big turn. On July 3, the Pew Center for Arts and Heritage gave Megawords a prestigious \$60,000 fellowship in the arts. Mainstream institutional recognition!

"We're trying to do art on our terms," says Dan Murphy, 36. "It's meant to blur boundaries and experi-

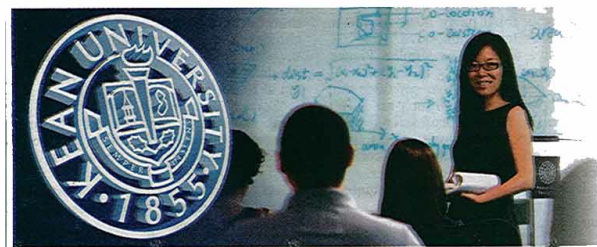


ment with the tensions between fine art and everyday life."

Fellow Megaworders Anthony Smyrski, 32, says they "want to tell the stories about life in cities around the world ... Art is not just in a museum."

Megawords was organic right from the start. As of the late 1990s, Smyrski and Murphy were hanger-outers in the Center City art scene, with common See **MEGAWORDS** on C4

A sampling of Megawords work: Magazines, photos, parts of installations, along with pieces for a show in Portland, Maine. ELISE WRABETZ / Staff



With a rich history that spans more than 150 years, Kean is a world-class, vibrant and diverse university. 16,000 students from all walks of life study a broad range of disciplines on a picturesque campus in Union, N.J. Kean's mosaic includes faculty, staff and students from every state in the nation and more than 70 countries around the world.

KEAN
UNIVERSITY
www.kean.edu
/KEANUNIVERSITY

ADVERTISEMENT

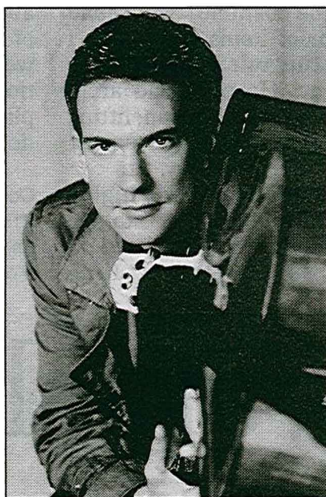
Playing with musical ideas

PITTSBURGH from C1 and the orchestra appear to see eye to eye. He “plays” the orchestra as a piano, with the same single-minded, nimble control. Anyone who knows the second-movement horn solo in *Symphony No. 5* would tag it as vaguely romantic, or, on a good outing, even searchingly romantic. To principal hornist William Caballero, it was something beyond — a brief, urgent song.

The printed part was just the starting point; note values were stretched, minute dynamic changes deployed. In other words, in a fairly short solo, Caballero was able to communicate a multitude of emotions whose collective meaning, dear listener, was all yours to ponder. It was a nice rejoinder to jazz musicians who think they alone hold license to stray from dictates of the score.

The third movement’s opening bars gusted in from the realm of dance — a waltz, but an unusually euphoric one that, again, related little to the actual written length of notes. Elation edged out pomp in the last big statement of the final movement, a fluid procession of bright sounds and sustained, big-shouldered phrasing.

Pittsburgh has a firmer concept of tone than I remember its having before Honeck’s arrival, and, in general, a serious and formidable mien. The woodwinds are stylishly pun-



Cellist Johannes Moser was an ideal soloist who also worked well with his colleagues.

MANFRED ESSER / Hänssler Classic

gent, the lower brass homogeneous — qualities laid bare (even via the Mann’s oddly blunt sound system) in Glinka’s *Overture to Russlan and Ludmilla*, and Dvorak’s *Cello Concerto in B minor*.

In the concerto, cellist Johannes Moser looked like he was interacting with the ensemble, but more important, he sounded that way. With a fine, vocal tone that, in the second movement especially, recalled the purest of his predecessors, Moser was an ideal soloist — concerned with drama, but with greatest fidelity to moments of interplay with his ensemble colleagues.

Choosing the right encore

is an art mastered by few. I’m not sure Honeck needed to embellish an already magnificent impression, but if the encores were meant to expose aspects of the orchestra not explored in the rest of the program, these two succeeded. The “Andantino quasi Allegretto (Prelude to Act III)” from Bizet’s *Carmen* was pleasant and serene.

The other encore came layered with added meaning. Curtis Institute of Music graduate Michael Rusinek (’92), Pittsburgh’s principal clarinetist, briefly referenced both the Tchaikovsky and Dvorak in his showy cadenza to the “Galop” from Khatchaturian’s *Masquerade Suite*. Impressive, for sure, and it’s clear the Pittsburghers can be good convivalists.

But it was the printed program, and everything unprinted that came in it, that made the more salient point: This is an orchestra to be taken seriously.

Contact Peter Dobrin at 215-854-5611 or pdobrin@phillynews.com. Read his blog at www.philly.com/artswatch.