

## SPOLETO

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Trapped in a war-torn world, she drags her children across the battlefields of Europe, fiercely determined to profit from the war while protecting her family from its atrocities. Kathryn Hunter will perform the title role in this adaptation directed by Nancy Meckler.

• A Spoleto favorite in 1987 and 1989, the Colla Marionettes return to Spoleto with "Aida" and "Around the World in Eighty Days." Artistic Director Eugenio Monti Colla has adapted Giuseppe Verdi's opera "Aida" for marionettes, complete with a puppet cast of Moorish dancers, Ethiopian prisoners, torch bearers and soldiers. Likewise, "Around the World in Eighty Days" is animated by 300 wooden marionettes. Bridges collapse, steamboats explode and elephants stampede during the 18 scenes of this globetrotting adventure.

The Colla Marionettes first staged this spectacle in 1896; today's production will include some of the original scenes, music and marionettes from the 100-year-old production as well as from the most recent production that premiered in 1992.

• Cannon Park will host a 50-foot-tall candy striped tent in which aerialists, illusionists, musicians and high-wire artists of the French ensemble Les Colporteurs will create its one-ring spectacle. For its North American debut, this 12-member troupe of tightrope and trapeze artists, dancers, and musicians transform the Italo Calvino novel "The Baron in the Trees," in which a 13-year-old baron leaves the dinner table one evening, walks outside, climbs a tree and lives the rest of his life in the tree tops, into their utterly charming production, "Filao." "Filao" is based upon poems that were written by the troupe and inspired by "The Baron in the Trees."

## Dance

This year's dance series will feature two of the most accomplished contemporary ballet companies on the international scene today, Cullberg Ballet and Les Grands Ballets Canadiens.

• Now entering its fourth decade, Sweden's Cullberg Ballet will thrill Spoleto audiences with choreographer Mats Ek's radically contemporary "Swan Lake," the only traditional element of which is Tchaikovsky's score. It promises to offer new insights into one of dance's beloved masterpieces.

• In its Spoleto debut, Les Grands Ballets Canadiens will pay homage to five of contemporary ballet's most respected choreographers in two different programs. For its first two performances, the company will perform its Great Europeans program, featuring Jiri Kylian's "Symphony of Psalms" and Nacho Duato's "Without Words," set to six songs by Franz Schubert and William Forsythe's

"Approximate Sonata." The final performance will include Balanchine's "Valse Fantasia" and Jose Limon's "The Moor's Pavane."

## Music

• In addition to the Bank of America Chamber Music Series, this year's Spoleto Artistic Director for Choral Activities Joseph Flummerfelt reunites the Westminster Choir with the Charleston Symphony Orchestra Chorus and the Spoleto Festival Orchestra for Poulenc's "Gloria" and Johannes Brahms' rhapsody for alto, male chorus and orchestra and his "Schicksalslied."

• Composer Heiner Goebbels explores the historical and experimental aspects of a city through a what is being called a "vibrant" score incorporating multimedia elements in the Festival Concert, "Surrogate Cities." The performance will take place in Memminger Auditorium, a facility that at one time was Charleston's major concert hall but has sat vacant for more than ten years. Calling it a visual and audio spectacle, Spoleto Music Director, Opera & Orchestra, Steven Sloane will conduct the Spoleto Festival Orchestra in the American premiere of this spectacular work that melds lights and images with a vibrant score for amplified orchestra and vocalists.

## Wachovia Jazz

• The College of Charleston will be the site of the 2000 series' first performance when vocalist Kurt Elling performs on May 27 at the College's Cistern. Newcomer Elling has been creating a stir on the jazz scene. Crediting much of his sound to his Chicago roots, Elling has been called one of the best jazz vocalists of his generation by *The Wall Street Journal*. He has been thrilling both critics and audiences alike with a rich baritone and his highly original interpretations of jazz classics.

• Considered one of jazz's foremost guitarists for more than two decades, in recent years Bill Frisell has been testing the boundaries of jazz guitar, crossing over into blues, country, rock and folk. Frisell can be heard on a variety of motion picture soundtracks, including Gus Van Zant's remake of "Psycho," the upcoming Wim Wenders film "Million Dollar Hotel," the Buster Keaton film "Go West" and his good friend Gary Larson's animated television project "Tales From the Far Side II." At Spoleto, Frisell will be joined by his new group, featuring bassist David Piltch; drummer Kenny Wollesen; and guitarist, acoustic dobro, lap steel, Hawaiian Weissenborn and mandolin player Greg Leisz.

• With her strong, agile voice, rhythmic virtuosity and improvisational ease, Dianne Reeves is clearly a powerful jazz performer. Her singing knows no boundaries, drawing upon a world of influences from Africa, Brazil, the Caribbean, gospel, R&B, classic and contemporary pop. Reeves credits the dignity in her singing to her childhood in Denver, where she was raised by her grandmother, mother and aunt.

• With his sensitivity to texture and poetic imagination, renowned pianist Fred Hersch is often likened to the dean of jazz piano Bill Evans. A pianist and composer, Hersch has been on the scene for more than 20 years and is considered one

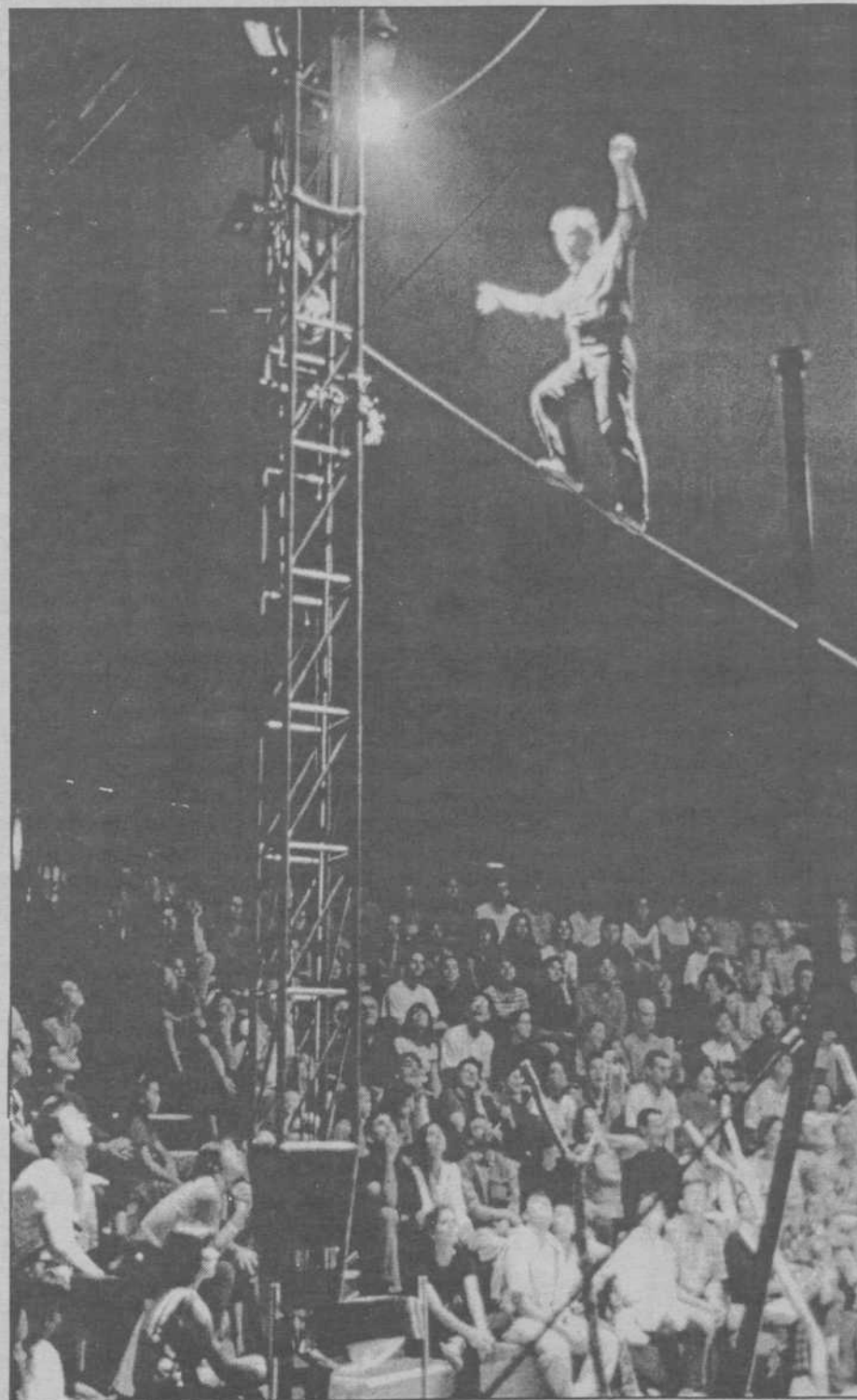
of jazz's foremost artists. He has released numerous albums, two of which have been nominated for Grammys. In addition to his solo performance, Hersch can be seen performing at Spoleto with the Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Dance Company in "Out Some Place," a recent collaboration of choreographer and composer.

• Chick Corea and Gary Burton return to Spoleto for one evening at the North Charleston Performing Arts Center. Following a set of duets with Burton, Corea will lead his new six-piece ensemble, Origin, in a program of recent Corea compositions and will invite Burton to join him in clos-

ing the performance with Origin.

## Festival Finale

• For the Festival Finale, the Spoleto Festival Orchestra will perform excerpts from Edward Elgar's "Sea Pictures" and Ottorino Respighi's three Botticelli pictures, "Trittico botticelliano," concluding with Modest Mussorgsky/Maurice Ravel's "Pictures at an Exhibition." The evening will end with a fireworks display.



JEAN PIERRE ESTOURNET SPOLETO FESTIVAL USA 2000

Tightrope artist Antoine Rigot with the French circus Les Colporteurs will perform in "Filao" during Spoleto Festival USA 2000, May 26 to June 11. The performance by this 12-member troupe of tightrope and trapeze artists, dancers, and musicians is inspired by the novel "The Baron in the Trees" and based on poems written by the troupe.