



## Upright Cabaret Presents **STEPHEN SCHWARTZ: MAKING GOOD** At The Ford Amphitheatre 8/23

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by BWV News Desk



Upright Cabaret ([www.uprightcabaret.com](http://www.uprightcabaret.com)), L.A.'s premier theatrical showcase featuring an eclectic mix of artists from stage, screen and recording, presents its third and final of its wildly successful "WICKED" Summer Night at the Ford, featuring the man who has given the world such musical theatre treasures as Wicked, Pippin, Godspell, The Baker's Wife and many more, [Stephen Schwartz: MAKING GOOD](#), featuring the West Coast premiere of songs from his new opera Séance on a Wet Afternoon, with musical direction by [Chris Bratten](#), directed by Upright Cabaret Artistic Director [Billy Porter](#) and performing ONE NIGHT ONLY, Sunday, August 23 at 7:30pm at the Ford Amphitheatre, 2580 Cahuenga Blvd. East in Hollywood.

[Stephen Schwartz](#), the Oscar, Emmy and Grammy award-winning lyricist and composer presents a sneak peak of his new opera, "Séance on a Wet Afternoon," followed by a second act extravaganza featuring Upright Cabaret All-Star performers interpreting Schwartz's most popular songs including "Defying Gravity," "The Wizard & I," "Popular," "Day by Day" "Corner of the Sky," "Magic to Do" and "Morning Glow," among others!

**General Ticket Prices:** tickets range from \$40 - \$80 (\$80 includes VIP reception with Artist Meet-and-Greet).

**Early buyer incentive:** purchase by August 17, pay only \$75 (VIP), \$55, \$45, \$35.

Tickets can be purchased online by visiting [www.fordtheatres.com](http://www.fordtheatres.com) or [www.uprightcabaret.com/events](http://www.uprightcabaret.com/events) or by calling (323) 461-3673.

[Stephen Schwartz](#) was born in New York City on March 6, 1948. He studied piano and composition at the Juilliard School of Music while in high school and graduated from [Carnegie Mellon University](#) in 1968 with a B.F.A. in Drama. Upon coming back to live in New York City, he went to work as a producer for [RCA Records](#), but shortly thereafter began to work in the Broadway theatre. His first major credit was the title song for the play BUTTERFLIES ARE FREE; the song was eventually used in the movie version, as well. In 1971, he wrote the music and new lyrics for GODSPELL, for which he won several awards, including two Grammys. This was followed by the English texts in collaboration with [Leonard Bernstein](#) for Bernstein's MASS, which opened the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C. The following year, he

wrote the music and lyrics for PIPPIN, and two years later, THE MAGIC SHOW. At one point, GODSPELL, PIPPIN and THE MAGIC SHOW were all running on Broadway simultaneously. He next wrote the music and lyrics for THE BAKER'S WIFE, followed by a musical version of [Studs Terkel's](#) WORKING, to which he contributed four songs and which he also adapted and directed, winning the Drama Desk Award as best director. He also co-directed the television production, which was presented as part of the PBS "American Playhouse" series. Next came songs for a one-act musical for children, CAPTAIN LOUIE, and a children's book, THE PERFECT PEACH. He then wrote music for three of the songs in the Off-Broadway revue, PERSONALS, lyrics to [Charles Strouse's](#) music for RAGS, and music and lyrics for CHILDREN OF EDEN. He then began working in film; collaborating with composer [Alan Menken](#) on the scores for the Disney animated features POCAHONTAS, for which he received two Academy Awards and another Grammy, and THE HUNCHBACK OF NOTRE DAME. He also provided songs for DreamWorks' first animated feature, THE PRINCE OF EGYPT, for which he won another Academy Award for the song "When You Believe." He most recently collaborated with [Alan Menken](#) on the songs for Disney's ENCHANTED. Mr. Schwartz provided music and lyrics for the original television musical, GEPETTO, seen on The Wonderful World of Disney and recently adapted for the stage as GEPETTO & SON. He has released two CDs on which he sings new songs, entitled RELUCTANT PILGRIM and UNCHARTED TERRITORY. Mr. Schwartz's most recent musical, WICKED, opened in the fall of 2003 and is currently running on Broadway and in several other productions around the United States and the world. In 2008, WICKED reached its 1900th performance on Broadway, making Mr. Schwartz the only songwriter in Broadway history ever to have three shows run more than 1900 performances. His first opera, SEANCE ON A WET AFTERNOON, will premiere this fall at Opera Santa Barbara. Mr. Schwartz has recently been given a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame and inducted into the Songwriters Hall of Fame. A book about his career, "Defying Gravity," has recently been released by Applause Books. Under the auspices of the [ASCAP Foundation](#), he runs [Musical Theatre Workshops](#) in New York and Los Angeles and serves on the ASCAP board; he is also currently President of the Dramatists' Guild. For further information, please visit <http://www.stephenschwartz.com>.

LAUREN FLANIGAN is widely known to audiences throughout North America, soprano Lauren Flanigan has established a career unique in the musical world today. Performing everything from the bel canto to Berio for the past 20 years, she has performed at all of the world's leading opera houses including The Metropolitan Opera, La Scala, Teatro San Carlo, Glyndebourne, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Bayerische Staatsoper, San Francisco Opera, Glimmerglass, and the New York City Opera. She has been hailed by TIME magazine as "the thinking man's Diva" for her unique musical programming and commitment to performing the works of 20th and 21st centuries. Lauren's career has included the world premieres of [Hugo Weisgall's](#) Esther (NYCO), Robert Beaser and Deborah Drattell's Central Park (Glimmerglass), [William Bolcom](#) and [Robert Altman's](#) A Wedding (Lyric Opera of Chicago), [John Corigliano's](#) The Ghosts of Versailles(The Metropolitan Opera), Deborah Drattell's Lillith (NYCO), Marina: A Life(American Opera Projects) and Song of Songs, [Thomas Pasatieri's](#) Frau Margo (Ft. Worth Opera), and Symphony #6, Plutonian Ode by [Philip Glass](#) and commissioned for her by [Carnegie Hall](#)(American Composers Orchestra, Brucknerhaus Orchestra, and BAM Next Wave). She has been responsible for and starred in the American revivals of [Jack Beeson's](#) Lizzie Borden (NYCO), [Virgil Thompson's](#) The Mother of US All (NYCO), [Marc Blitzstein's](#) Regina(Florida Grand Opera, Bard Summerscape), [Deems Taylor's](#) Peter Ibbetson (Seattle Symphony), Howard Hanson's Merrymount(Seattle

Symphony), Marvin [David Levy](#)'s Morning Becomes Electra (Lyric Opera of Chicago, Seattle Opera, NYCO), Amy Beach's The Cabildo, and most recently the celebrated revivals of [Samuel Barber](#)'s two masterpieces Vanessa and Antony & Cleopatra (NYCO). CD and DVD performances include The Sun Cantata, Frau Margot (Albany Records), The Cabildo, Merrymount and Peter Ibbetson (Naxos), Die Liebe der Danae (Telarc), Symphony #6 Plutonian Ode (Orange Mountain Music), The Ghosts of Versailles (Metropolitan Opera), Nabucco (Teatro San Carlo), and the major motion picture Death to Smoochy (as the ice skating opera diva). She has been featured in a Great Performances Telecast of Central Park; Live from Lincoln Center telecast of Lizzie Borden; the [Richard Tucker](#) Gala, and The Metropolitan Opera presents I Lombardi (opposite [Luciano Pavarotti](#)). In September 2009 she will create the role of Myra in Stephen Schwarz's Séance on a Wet Afternoon an opera he has written specifically for her and then returns to the New York City Opera to open their 2009/10 season as the title role in Esther, as opera she premiered for them in 1993. Her new solo cd Monologues was released this past January by Albany Records to great reviews and equally well received recordings with the Seattle Symphony of Mahler's Eighth Symphony and Peter Ibbetson were released this summer.

[Valarie Pettiford](#) was thrilled to start 2009, guest starring on the hit CBS series "CRIMINAL MINDS" as Sandra Harris. She continues her recurring role on the hit comedy series "HOUSE OF PAYNE" as Sandra Lucas. In 2007 Valarie opened Summer Concert Series with The Pasadena Pops conducted by Rachel Worby and she was also thrilled to shoot the pilot "ANATOMY OF HOPE" for HBO as Deanna Rivers directed by JJ Abrams. In February 2006, Valarie completed her fourth season of the hit TV series HALF & HALF (now in Syndication) that earned her three NAACP Image Award nominations for her portrayal as Big Dee Dee Thorne. She guest starred as Dr. Lana Whitford in CSI MIAMI (Spring 2006), Ellen Laskow in BONES (Spring 2007), Susan Latham in CSI (Spring 2007), and as Aunt Jackie in the #1 film for 3 weeks and now the # 1 DVD, STOMP THE YARD. A Sony Screen Gems production (2007). Her widely successful one-woman shows was performed to sold out audiences at Pepperdine University's Smothers Theatre, The Gardenia Room, the El Portal Theater and at Mark's presented by Upright Cabaret in Los Angeles. The Metropolitan Room in New York City where she received The 2007 Backstage Bistro Award and most recently at New York's Famous BIRDLAND supper club! Broadway/Tour credits; "FOSSE", for which she was nominated for a Tony Award, Outer Critics Circle, Dora [Mavor Moore](#) award and recognizes by the Drama League, CHICAGO (opposite [Chita Rivera](#)) London West End debut, SOPHISTICATED LADIES, original cast and understudy for [Judith Jamison](#). GRIND, 'DANCIN', BIG DEAL, SHOW BOAT (NAACP, LA's Robby, and the Vancouver Sun Reader's Choice Awards. And nominations for Ovation and Jessie Richardson Theater Awards. Des Mc Anuff's production of The Wiz, and THE WILD PARTY (NAACP Theatre and The Garland Awards for Best actress in a play) Ovation nomination. Highlights in TV/FILM; THE DISTRICT, FRASIER, THE WEST WING, ONE LIFE TO LIVE, THE WIZ, THE COTTON CLUB and GLITTER. Valarie continues to lend her support and talents to many charities annually and is thrilled to have fulfilled a lifelong dream of recording an album titled HEAR MY SOUL, being sold at [www.cdbaby.com](http://www.cdbaby.com) Currently; Ms. Pettiford is performing in the L.A. Phil produced GUYS AND DOLLS at the Hollywood Bowl opposite Jessica Beil and Broadway veteran [Ken Page](#).

[Nathan Lee Graham](#) has been seen in hit films like "Zoolander", "Sweet Home Alabama", and "Hitch". Critically acclaimed series like "The Comeback", "Absolutely

Fabulous" and "Scrubs". Tony and Grammy nominated Broadway show "The Wild Party"(LADCC Award Best Featured Performer in a Musical). Grammy Award winning best classical recording 2005 [William Bolcom's](#) Songs Of Innocence And Of Experience". First National tours "Jesus Christ Superstar", "Showboat". Regional Theatre (Definitive rendering of "King Herod" NY Times) etc., and commercials. Stay tuned for a new film "818" and a new CD "Easy" and Nathan's pilot "The Dresser"! Nathan is a proud graduate of Webster University Conservatory.

[Matt Cusson](#) - His album continues to receive fanfare and recognition, with "One Of These Nights" winning the internationally acclaimed [John Lennon](#) Songwriting Contest for best jazz song of the year. It holds true for fans all around the world, along with fellow musicians and talented artists and for people like [James Taylor](#), [Brian McKnight](#), "Today" host Meredith Vierra and "American Idol" judge [Randy Jackson](#) - all of whom say the same thing: [Matt Cusson](#) is an extraordinary musician, a remarkable singer, a gifted piano player and a star on the rise. Currently, he is touring the world with [Brian McKnight](#) - who discovered Matt in 2000 and has been a mentor ever since. Matt was chosen to tour with Christiana Aguilera and has shared stages and studios with James and Livingston Taylor, [Stanley Clarke](#), Babyface, [BeBe Winans](#), Jon B. and [Jessica Simpson](#), as well as many others. He's performed live on "The View" and "Live with Regis and Kelly", and won "Amateur Night" at the Apollo on three separate occasions. He's the complete package: rich musicianship, awesome voice, incredible range, charisma and most importantly, he writes truly amazing songs that hook listeners in, leaving them wanting more.

CHARITY WICKS (Musical Direction) hails from a little farm in rural Minnesota, but now lives and works in bright and shiny New York City. After spending four years in Philadelphia, and earning her Master's Degree from Temple University, she moved to NYC in 2005 to continue her education, and currently holds the status of ABD in the doctoral program at The Manhattan School of Music in Instrumental Accompanying. Comfortable with many styles and genres of music, Miss Wicks keeps herself busy with various projects and concerts in NYC and abroad, from the classical stage with solo and chamber recitals, to varied opera venues and Broadway theaters, as a music director and keyboardist. She is an active collaborative pianist and chamber musician, regularly playing concerts in the New York and Philadelphia areas, as well as having given recitals throughout the United States and Canada, and in Mexico and Italy. In the summer of 2007, Charity had an amazing encounter at jury duty that eventually led her down the path to becoming the Associate Music Director and Conductor of Spring Awakening, which she held for a year and a half, until its final Broadway performance on January 18th, 2009. Since then, she has had a great time continuing to play on the Great White Way for In The Heights and Wicked. She has been seen music directing cabarets and shows throughout NYC, in such places as Joe's Pub, La Poisson Rouge, [The Duplex](#), The [Laurie Beechman](#) Theatre, and The Zipper Factory. She has also music directed a number of final projects at NYU in the Graduate Musical Theatre Writing Program.

Charity has been the Music Director of the NYC workshops of [Stephen Schwartz's](#) opera, Séance on a Wet Afternoon, and is thrilled to be the Associate Conductor of the opera's world premiere in Santa Barbara, CA in September.

Upright Cabaret ([www.uprightcabaret.com](http://www.uprightcabaret.com)) is redefining the cabaret milieu for a new

generation of audiences. Founded by producers [Chris Isaacson](#) and [Shane Scheel](#) in 2005, Upright seeks to celebrate old style cabaret while simultaneously turning it on its ear, bringing young Broadway and young Hollywood together in a live setting. Upright performers run the gamut from Tony-nominated divas to up-and-coming recording artists to film and TV stars. Indeed, Upright's talent roster reads like a "who's who" of the entertainment industry, including current American Idol finalist [Adam Lambert](#), film actress [Katy Mixon](#) (Four Christmases, HBO's East Bound and Down), [Neil Patrick Harris](#) (CBS's How I Met Your Mother & ABC's Doogie Howser, M.D.) and [Hunter Parrish](#) (Showtime's Weeds).

Upright's roster also includes [Michael Urie](#) (ABC's Ugly Betty), [Vicki Lewis](#) (NBC's NewsRadio), [Busy Phillips](#) (NBC's Freaks & Geeks, ER), and cast members from over 75 Broadway productions, including Wicked, Rent, Jersey Boys and Spamalot, to name a few!

Upright Cabaret, born and bred in West Hollywood, and has been taking Southern California by storm, with shows in Palm Springs, San Diego, Santa Barbara and Avalon and recently on the East Coast at Joe's Pub in New York City.

For more information, please visit [www.uprightcabaret.com](http://www.uprightcabaret.com) and [www.myspace.com/uprightcabaret](http://www.myspace.com/uprightcabaret) or [www.youtube.com/uprightcabaret](http://www.youtube.com/uprightcabaret).