

## TRAVEL

# Doing the Charleston Spoleto Festival U.S.A.

BY CECILY McMILLAN  
NEW YORK TIMES SYNDICATE

For 16 seasons Spoleto Festival U.S.A. has lured Charleston's high-mindedness from its drawing rooms, libraries and walled gardens to its streets and theaters.

This year there are more than 100 events scheduled until June 7, including United States premieres of opera and dance and dozens of chamber music, choral, jazz and orchestral performances.

At no other time of year does Charleston seem more enduring than during Spoleto, when the city turns its attentions from the past to the bustling life set before it — musicians carrying instruments, street mimes and basket weavers, groups of theatergoers absorbed in conversation.

## The festival

The disputes over artistic control that rocked the Spoleto Festival last year seem to have been resolved, resulting in a new season under the firm hand of the festival's founder, Gian Carlo Menotti.

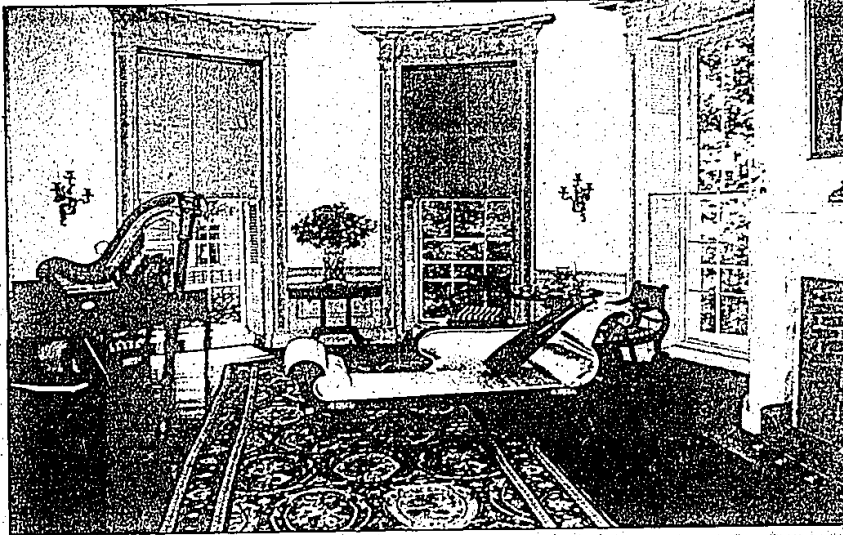
This year's program carries forward his vision to produce in a single blow an astonishing variety of performances.

The performances may be traditional or radical ("shocking," Menotti called the production of Richard Strauss' "Elektra," to be performed with the American soprano Deborah Polaski on June 2 and 5), as intimate as chamber music or as grand as a choir.

And there are new features: late-night cabaret concerts and a one-man show throughout the festival, by the Polish sculptor Igor Mitoraj.

The festival will close June 7 with a concert by the Duke Ellington Orchestra. The regular Spoleto events are augmented by 600, often free, Piccolo Spoleto performances.

The best ways to get tickets are in person, by phone — (803) 577-4500, 24 hours a day with a handling



Historic home: The Nathaniel Russell House, completed in 1808, is a neoclassical dwelling turned into a museum interpreting the domestic life and habits of old Charleston.

charge of \$1 a ticket — or by fax to (803) 723-6383. Request ticket information for specific performances or dates and return the ticket-order form with a Visa or Mastercard number. Tickets range from \$8 to \$45.

The main ticket office, at 14 George St., is open from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. daily. On June 7 it will close at 4 p.m.

A new box office at the Dock

Street Theater, at 135 Church St., is open daily from 10 a.m. to about 30 minutes after the last performance at the theater begins.

Tickets are available at 14 George St. up to one hour before curtain time; remaining tickets go on sale at performance sites 30 minutes before curtain.

Chairs or standing-room spots for sold-out performances at the Dock Street Theater and the Garden

Theater go on sale at 10 a.m. on the day of performance.

Tickets and schedules for Piccolo Spoleto are available at 14 George St. and the Gaillard Municipal Auditorium, at 77 Calhoun St., daily from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Ticket prices range from \$5 to \$10.

## Sightseeing

Charleston's multilayered history can be seen on foot, by carriage, bi-

cycle or boat or in its house museums. Brochures and suggestions are available at the Visitors Center, at 375 Meeting St., or the Edmunds Center for Historic Preservation, at 108 Meeting St. Call (803) 853-8000 or (803) 724-8484, respectively.

Walking tours led by city-licensed guides start at several downtown locations last about two hours and cost \$10 per person. If you

House museums interpret the domestic life and habits of old Charleston. The Nathaniel Russell House, at 51 Meeting St., was completed in 1808 and is considered by architectural historians to be one of America's most significant neoclassical dwellings.

strike out alone take the locally published Charleston Guide (\$3.50).

Bicycles can be rented — \$4 an hour, \$12 for four hours — at Charleston Bicycle Rentals, at 48 John St. For more information call (803) 725-7433.

House museums interpret the domestic life and habits of old Charleston. The Nathaniel Russell House, at 51 Meeting St., was completed in 1808 and is considered by architectural historians to be one of America's most significant neoclassical dwellings. Admission is \$5. For more information call (803) 724-8484.

Another stop, the Colonial-era Heyward-Washington House, at 87 Church St., is operated by the Charleston Museum. Admission is \$5.

Horse-drawn carriage rides (\$12 per person) provide the chance to sightsee and listen to colorful tales at a leisurely pace. Several companies provide the service.

Two such companies are the Charleston Carriage Co., at 96 North Market St., and Palmetto Carriage Works, at 40 North Market St. For more information call (803) 577-0042 or (803) 723-8145, respectively.

## With Disney project, time shares come of age

BY EVERETT POTTER  
SPECIAL WRITER



While the recession lingers on like a hot cold, time shares are enjoying a modest boom.

Sales are up, according to the American Resort Development Association (ARDA), a trade organization for the time-share industry.

As of April 1992, there were 1.415 million time-share owners in the United States, an 18.2 percent jump from 1990.

There is also excitement about two new players who have recently entered the market.

In February, Hilton Hotels Corp. formed a partnership to build and market time shares with Grand Vacations Ltd., calling the new enterprise Hilton Grand Vacations.

But the start-up that prompted the most attention was made by The Walt Disney Co. In October 1991, it unveiled the Disney Vacation Club, a company to market Disney's first venture into time sharing.

The magical name of Disney was like a wave of Tinkerbell's wand to the industry. It seemed to signify that at long last, time shares had come of age.

For those in the time-share busi-

ness, this was no small achievement.

"There was a public perception that time shares meant lack of vacation flexibility," said W. Lynn Seldon Jr., publisher of time-share Traveler, a bimonthly newsletter for time-share owners. "If you had a time share at Hilton Head Island for the third week of August, people believed you were stuck forever with that week. That's just not true."

Then there was the problem of high-pressure sales techniques.

"You'd walk in and a salesman would explain that the unit was \$14,000 — but if you bought today you could have it for \$11,000. If you waited till tomorrow, the price went back up," said Mark Pacala, general manager of Disney Vacation Club.

"So the only sales 'made' were there, right on the spot. And if you didn't buy you left feeling beat up."

Most industry watchers agree this has changed. Pacala notes that 70 percent of Disney's time-share purchases "are made by people after they get home. That's unprecedented in this business."

A time share is essentially a prepaid vacation. It's marketed as a period of vacation time, usually seven days, at a specific resort.

The price depends on the type and size of accommodation, its location and the season in which it is

to be used. In time-share industry jargon, the colors red, white and blue are used to signify high, middle and low season, respectively.

A red week for a two-bedroom apartment at a top resort might cost \$12,000, a white week \$10,000 and a blue week \$8,000. The cost of an average time share, according to ARDA, is \$9,600.

In traditional real-estate, clients buy the property; with time shares, in effect, clients "own" the specific week in the specific property for the rest of their lives.

Owners can exchange their time-share week for a comparable week at another resort, using the services of brokers such as Resort Condominiums International Inc. (RCI), a company that manages time-share resort exchanges for a nominal fee.

For example, it allows the owner of a red week at Hilton Head Island in August to make an exchange for a red week in Vail, Colo., at Christmas.

The time-share industry began in Europe in 1968 when owners of apartments in the French Alps allowed people to buy vacations a week at a time. The idea was to get to a favorite ski resort for the same week, year after year.

"It was the oil crisis of the mid-'70s that awakened the industry in this country," said Brian Callaghan, who publishes "Endless Vacation," a travel magazine owned by RCI.

"You had all of these second homes built in the early '70s that were sitting unsold. Time shares began to spring up about 1973."

There were eight time-share resorts in the United States at the end of 1973, according to ARDA's research. Currently, there are 1,329.

If a time share seems expensive, advocates urge consumers to consider the cost of a week's accommodation at their favorite resort and multiply it year after year.

"Time shares appeal to families for several reasons," Callaghan said. "They're a tremendous hedge against inflation because they fix your vacation costs. After five to seven years, you've broken even."

Families who visit Disney World during the same week every year are attracted by Disney Vacation Club. The company has already completed 175 of its first 197 time-share units in Orlando and 50 have been sold.

For information contact the American Resort Development Association, 1220 L St. N.W., Suite 510, Washington, D.C. 20005 or call (202) 371-6700. For a subscription to "Time-share Traveler," which is \$29 a year, contact the publication at P.O. Box 5628, Richmond, Va. 23220 or call (804) 358-2503.

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## Fifteen-hundred find William!

Over the past four weeks, we have enjoyed hiding William Shakespeare on the pages of your hometown newspaper in our "Where's William" contest. We hope our entrants enjoyed finding the Bard.

We received more than 1,500 correct entries and from these, eight names were impartially drawn—winners of a three-day getaway for two. The lucky winners listed here will enjoy the Victorian charm of Stratford Friday, June 19 through Sunday, June 21, 1992. This wonderful package includes two night's lodging, Saturday brunch, and two tickets for "Romeo & Juliet," "World of Wonders," and "H.M.S. Pinafore."

Our lucky winners are:

Theresa Badagliacqua BIRMINGHAM	Clinton A. Sampson TROY
Carol Matthews FARMINGTON HILLS	Monica Faerber GARDEN CITY

Robert Bellfy LIVONIA	Kenneth L. Cooper REDFORD
Helen Tertel PLYMOUTH	Karen K. Lewis ROYAL OAK

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