

'Miss Saigon,' 'Will Rogers' duel for top Tony honors

Broadway's stars roll with punches

By Amy Schmidt

Broadway can be a nasty place. Take for instance last month's "I Hate Hamlet" incident in which Nicol Williamson lectured co-actor Evan Handler in front of the audience, then hit him with a sword during a dueling scene. Handler, outraged, walked off stage (undoubtedly to rehearse for "I Hate Nicol"), and an understudy finished the performance.

But don't expect high drama like that on Broadway's biggest night of the year: Tony night. The 1991 Tony Awards will be doled out Sunday, June 2, and everyone will exhibit their best behavior for CBS' cameras.

This year's big vote-getters are "Miss Saigon," a Vietnam-set "Madame Butterfly," and "The Will Rogers Follies," a kudo to the American actor and humorist. The two are tied with all 11 nominations each. Leading actors and actresses in both shows are contenders—Jonathan Pryce and Lea Salonga for "Miss Saigon" and Keith Carradine and Dee Hoty for "Will Rogers." (Despite rave reviews for his "I Hate Hamlet" performance, Nicol Williamson found himself left in the cold.)

A total of 27 productions opened this season, including 14 new plays, seven musicals, five revivals and one special attraction—a good year for Broadway. Playwright Neil Simon also won his first Pulitzer for "Lost in Yonkers."

Julie Andrews and Jeremy Irons will co-host the soiree. Both are acting-award vets. Irons won a Tony for "The Real Thing" and copped an Oscar this year for "Reversal of Fortune." Andrews has two Tony nominations to her credit and won an Academy Award for "The Sound of Music."

A montage of talents will help present the awards to the winners. On hand will be Joan Collins, Whoopi Goldberg, Steve Guttenberg,

Audrey Hepburn, William Hurt, Raul Julia, Shirley MacLaine, Penn & Teller, Lily Tomlin, Carol Channing and Denzel Washington.

1991's nominees include:

Best Play: "Lost in Yonkers,"

"Our Country's Good," "Shadowlands," "Six Degrees of Separation."

Best Musical: "Miss Saigon," "Once on This Island," "The Secret Garden," "The Will Rogers Follies."

Best Leading Actor in a Play: Peter Frechette, "Our Country's Good"; Nigel Hawthorne, "Shadowlands"; Tom McGowan, "La Bete"; Courtney B. Vance, "Six Degrees of Separation."

Best Leading Actress in a Play: Stockard Channing, "Six Degrees of Separation"; Julie Harris, "Lucifer's Child"; Cherry Jones, "Our Country's Good"; Mercedes Ruehl, "Lost in Yonkers."

Best Leading Actor in a Musical: Keith Carradine, "The Will Rogers Follies"; Paul Hipp, "Buddy...The Buddy Holly Story"; Jonathan Pryce, "Miss Saigon"; Topol, "Fiddler on the Roof."

Best Leading Actress in a Musical: June Angela, "Shogun, The Musical"; Dee Hoty, "The Will Rogers Follies"; Cathy Rigby, "Peter Pan"; Lea Salonga, "Miss Saigon."

Broadway's biggest stars will come out for CBS' broadcast of "The 45th Annual Tony Awards," live from New York's Minskoff Theatre, Sunday. Multi-award-winners Jeremy Irons and Julie Andrews co-host the telecast. The show also marks the 25th anniversary of the first network broadcast of the event.

WEDNESDAY



Emmy Award-winner Robert Stack hosts NBC's mind-bending *Unsolved Mysteries*, Wednesdays. The program's TV clues have helped bring about the capture of many criminals.

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