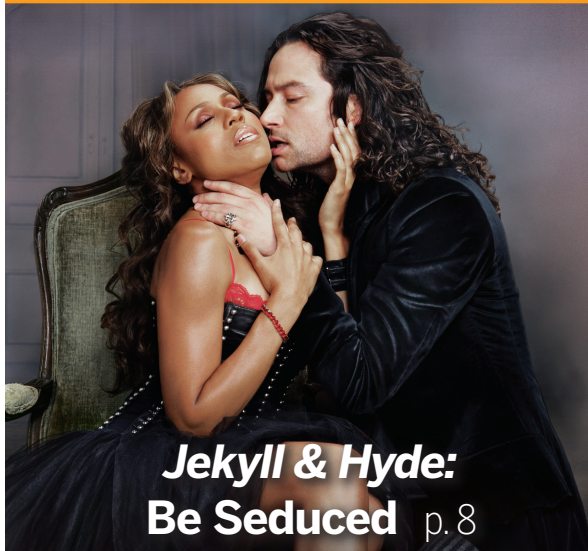


onstage

Fall/Winter 2012/13



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Blumenthal Performing Arts

KNIGHT THEATER
Levine Center for the Arts

BLUMENTHAL PERFORMING ARTS CENTER
Belk Theater • Booth Playhouse
Stage Door Theater

SPIRIT SQUARE
McGlohon Theater
Duke Energy Theater



Come and Hear the People Sing

Critic and fan favorite *Les Misérables* returns to Charlotte in an all-new 25th anniversary production with author-inspired visuals

Come and “hear the people sing” as *Les Misérables* marches into Belk Theater Feb. 12-17 as part of the Duke Energy Broadway Lights Series. This Broadway masterpiece has not played the Queen City since May 2004 and is clearly one of the hottest shows on the 2012-13 Broadway season.

Les Misérables is an epic and uplifting story about the survival of the human spirit. The magnificent score includes the classic songs “I Dreamed a Dream,” “On My Own,” “Stars,” “Bring Him Home,” “Do You Hear the People Sing?” “One Day More,” “Empty Chairs at Empty Tables,” “Master of the House” and many more.

Cameron Mackintosh’s new production celebrates the show’s 25th anniversary with fresh staging and scenery inspired by the paintings of Victor Hugo, who wrote the classic novel from which this musical is based. Hugo (1802-1885) is known primarily in the United States for his two most famous novels, “*Les Misérables*” and “*Notre-Dame de Paris*” (“*The Hunchback of Notre Dame*”).

In France, however, Hugo is also known as a poet, playwright, politician and activist supporting freedom of the press, speaking against social injustice and the death penalty, and being critical of the government.

Victor Hugo as a Visual Artist

What many people do not know about Hugo is his skill in visual art. He created more than 4,000 drawings and paintings; and while he sketched throughout his life, he wanted his writing to be his main focus.

During the years 1848-1851, when Hugo was focusing on politics instead of writing, visual art became his primary creative outlet.

Upon seeing Hugo’s work, artist Eugène Delacroix, a leader of the French Romantic school of visual art, was known to say that if Hugo decided to “become a painter instead of a writer, he would have outshone the artists of their century.”

A New Vision and Scenic Design

Mark Hoebee, the producing artistic director of *Les Misérables*, says, “For the celebration of this 25th anniversary, the idea was to create a whole new visual experience of the show.”

Matt Kinley, the scenic and image designer, started

researching the show and found that Hugo was “the most wonderful, forward-thinking painter in the 19th century, who kept his work relatively hidden.”

“I started researching his paintings, and that became the basis for how we developed the show,” Kinley says. “Once you look at those paintings, they are so atmospheric and rich and dark and brooding – exactly the same qualities as the show has.” He says

using Hugo’s paintings as the backdrop for the set “worked very well, putting it in a world of decay and darkness, yet gave us the vehicles to take us away from that world into some slightly more beautiful pictures for some of the more romantic scenes.”

This new design for the 25th anniversary of *Les Misérables* incorporates the flying and moving pieces of scenery enhanced by digital projections inspired by Hugo’s own sketches.

According to Kinley, the set has “been painted by the same hands that wrote it.” ♦

– Written by Robin Pease and originally published in the *PlayhouseSquare Les Misérables Buzz Extra*. This article may have been edited for style and brevity.



Broadway Lights Series

LES MISÉRABLES

Feb. 12-17, 2013

Belk Theater

Want to see it? Better hurry!
This one’s going to sell out soon.