

MICHAEL UNGER'S SELECTED PRESS QUOTES

A Christmas Carol at McCarter

"Once again, the annual production is warmer than a thick-logged fireplace in a happy home. The production's two hours speed by, yet take the time to be wonderfully moving ...**excellent special effects.. sensitive direction...**" *"A Christmas Carol" remains the most opulent show New Jersey sees all year.*" - (Newark Star Ledger)

"This is an evening that **soars from the first moments... sensitive direction... fresh and emotionally charged...**

it has the size and feel of the best Broadway family musicals. The current staging will sweep you into the Christmas season, leave you gasping in admiration and on your feet cheering. When is some other regional theater in the area going to discover the magic that Unger exudes?" - (Princeton Packet)

"**Where, I asked myself, does Unger hide his magic wand?** He must have one. Every year, what he brings to his grateful audiences of all ages is another memorable occasion." - (Times of Trenton)



The Happy Time at The Signature Theatre, Arlington, VA

"... a little **charmer... effervescent.** *The Happy Time* became the first Broadway show to lose a million dollars. Watching this charming and modest production, you'd never guess that such a fiscal debacle was possible." (Washington Post)

"*The Happy Time*" receives a **fresh and earnest revival**, staged by Michael Unger with ultimate intimacy in Signature's tiny Ark Theater. **Unger keeps the kid-filled cast in perpetual motion...** (Variety)

"**A picture-perfect production.**" (Washingtonian)

The Happy Time is definitely a **fresh look at an overlooked jewel** of a show. Featuring a **spectacular cast**, production values evocative of simpler times and **fresh, tight direction**, *The Happy Time* will certainly cause (and rightly so) historians to re-evaluate what is a deeply heartfelt and charming show. **Mr. Unger has masterfully utilized the tiny space with a simple concept and beautifully paced staging.** Wondrous staging and technical craft... **one of the most dazzling jewels of the season.** (BroadwayWorld.com)

Signature Theatre's illustrious *Kander & Ebb Celebration* might end up being **most remembered for reviving *The Happy Time*** -- Like a lost family photograph that is re-discovered while rummaging through an old trunk, the show generates quietly powerful sentiment with the fleeting moment it captures. **Director Michael Unger, aided by composer John Kander, has stripped away the Broadway trappings to reveal a quaint but emotionally intense chamber musical.** (TheatreMania.com)

Behind The Limelight at NYMF

"...a **genuinely moving portrait** that well deserves development. Director **Michael Unger's staging is highly effective**, particularly in the moving final moments featuring all three



Chaplin incarnations onstage together.” (NYPost)

“**Michael Unger directs this ambitious, full-length show with some bold choices and it fills the eye, the mind and the heart.**” (Edge, NY)

“There are times when a show begins and you just know that you are in for **something extraordinarily special** – this is such a show.” (Talk Entertainment)

The Rink at The Cape Playhouse

"Director Michael Unger has delivered a musical with quirky, **captivating charm** that is reminiscent of the debut of “The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee” at Barrington Stage two summers ago, which he also helmed. That offbeat phenomenon quickly found a home on Broadway. This show has the potential to make a comparable leap." (Boston Globe)

"It takes **considerable legerdemain** to balance a story of family dysfunction with the periodic upbeat numbers that a musical needs to stay afloat. Fortunately, director Michael Unger never lets the pace flag or the tone go maudlin. The show's "sour" quality reads today as refreshingly astringent... **if there's any fairness in the world, this show will eventually find its way back to Broadway.**" (TheatreMania)



My Sister in This House at Deaf West



“... a **striking new production** by Deaf West. Director, Michael Unger and his cast create a rich world of ritual. ... intensely erotic symbiosis... This may be **the most embodied production I’ve ever seen in L.A.** “My Sister” is an **absorbing**, often oppressive study of class and codependency.“ (LA Times)

“Through the thoughtfulness of playwright Wendy Kesselman and director Michael Unger, this production ideally suits Deaf West Theatre and its **imaginative yet nonintrusive melding of the hearing and nonhearing worlds.**” (Backstage)

“Handsomely staged...” (LA Weekly)

Crimes of the Heart at Theatre Aspen

Nobody--neither actors nor audience--gets cheated in the Aspen production directed by Michael Unger with a confidence that embraces Southern gothic chaos without losing control of the proceedings for a single moment. Maybe you've seen the movie but the stage version at Theatre Aspen surpasses those performances in my opinion. There's nothing these actresses can't do. (KSNO Radio)



La rondine at Sarasota Opera



“As Sarasota Opera's strong new production of Giacomo Puccini's "La Rondine" (The Swallow) surged across the stage Saturday evening, it was difficult to justify its neglect by major opera companies. **Stage Director Michael Unger kept the lovers' tumultuous emotions in tight focus.**” (Sarasota Herald Tribune)

“The Sarasota Opera’s new production of *La rondine* is so **breathtakingly beautiful from the creative, innovative staging by Michael Unger that one can’t help but sigh with the romance of it all.** It’s as rich and colorful as a

Manet, and as heart-stopping beautiful as a Shakespeare Sonnet.” (Longboat Observer)

“Sometimes called “a poor man’s ‘Traviata’” because of parallels in plot, **director Michael Unger proved that *La Rondine* is anything but; it is an opera to be taken seriously for its own merits.** One hopes that the excellence of the SO staging will lead other companies to consider the work. (Opera Today)

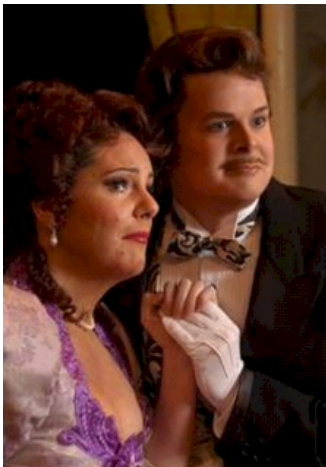
L’amico Fritz at Sarasota Opera

To put it bluntly, this three-act opera, **directed with strength and understanding** by Michael Unger was so appealing, we were left wondering why it’s not performed more often. Unger’s was the first we’ve seen that made the ethnicity of the characters clear. Unger’s characterizations made sense and added to the warmth of the people populating the opera. **This production is terrific.** (Longboat Observer)



Die Fledermaus at Sarasota Opera

"A delicious feast for both eyes and ears. This production has it all in spades. **Superb stage direction by Michael Unger included physical comedy and pratfalls executed cleanly with great effect.** The cast managed to keep pace with both the musical and acting demands brilliantly. From start to finish, the Sarasota Opera has produced a winner..." (Sarasota Herald Tribune)



"This production, directed by Michael Unger, is **effervescent, delicious and totally delightful;** bringing joyful guffaws in the theatre and happy hums outside. **Unger is gloriously surefooted – he has artfully walked the dangerously thin line between broad comedy and philosophical observations.** His direction draws out an honesty of feeling that’s often lacking in broad comedies. This “Fledermaus” is batting a thousand." (Longboat Observer)

"A finer production is hard to imagine” (Venice Gondolier)

The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee at Barrington Stage Company

(Winner - Best Director by the Berkshire Eagle)



“The cause of all this M-I-R-T-H and R-A-P-T-U-R-E is "The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee," a new musical created by **a team of divine madmen and women.** **The production moves smoothly and effortlessly”... - Berkshire Eagle**

“Quick, count on your fingers -- one hand might suffice -- the shows you've seen that were so enchanting, you **savored every moment and**

prayed that the curtain call would never come. Now get ready for another: *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*, which recently debuted at the Barrington Stage Company in the Berkshires.” – Theatre Mania

Caligula at the New York Musical Theatre Festival

(Winner – Best of the Fest Audience Favorite Award)

Michael Unger, the director, handles the traffic nicely and keeps it all balanced on several tightropes at once: the show is almost camp, almost parody; almost funny, almost a tragedy. – (The New York Times)

“With the help of director Michael Unger's **admirably kinetic staging**, [the show] highlights the majesty in Caligula's madness and its seductiveness” – (Broadway.com)

