

Today's birthdays

Actor Armin Mueller-Stahl is 89. Singer-actor Tommy Steele is 83. Pope Francis is 83. Actor Bernard Hill is 75. Actor Ernie Hudson is 74. Comedian-actor Eugene Levy is 73. Actress Marilyn Hassett is 72. **Actor Wes Studi is 72.** Pop musician Jim Bonfanti (The Raspberries) is 71. Actor Joel Brooks is 70. Rock singer Paul Rodgers is 70. R&B singer Wanda Hutchinson Vaughn (The Emotions) is 68. Actor Bill Pullman is 66. Actor Barry Livingston is 66. Country singer Sharon White is 66. Producer-director-writer Peter Farrelly is 63. Rock musician Mike Mills (R.E.M.) is 61. Pop singer Sarah Dallin (Bananarama) is 58. Country singer Tracy Byrd is 53. Country musician Duane Propes is 53. Actress Laurie Holden is 50. DJ Homicide (Sugar Ray) is 49. Actor Sean Patrick Thomas is 49. Actress Claire Forlani is 48. Pop-rock musician Eddie Fisher (OneRepublic) is 46. **Actress Sarah Paulson is 45.** Actress Marissa Ribisi is 45. Actor Giovanni Ribisi is 45. Actress Milla Jovovich is 44. Singer Bree Sharp is 44. Singer-songwriter Ben Goldwasser (MGMT) is 37. Rock singer Mikky Ekko is 36. Actress Shannon Woodward is 35. Actress Emma Bell is 33. Actress Vanessa Zima is 33. Rock musician Taylor York (Paramore) is 30. Actor Graham Rogers is 29. Actor-singer Nat Wolff is 25.



Lottery

Monday, Dec. 16, results:

Midday Pick 3 4-7-0 (2)
 Midday Pick 4 1-9-4-1 (4)
 Evening Pick 3 0-4-1 (4)
 Evening Pick 4 8-7-7-5 (6)
 Midday Lucky Day 7-15-20-32-41
 Evening Lucky Day 5-8-12-14-38
 (\$600,000)
 Lotto 17-25-26-31-42-50
 Extra shot: 12 (\$14.5 million)
 Tuesday Mega Millions...\$372 million



Mariah Carey's original holiday classic, "All I Want for Christmas Is You," has reached the No. 1 spot on the Billboard Hot 100 chart 25 years after its release. Billboard announced that the song topped this week's chart, giving Carey the 19th No. 1 of her career.

25 years later, Carey's original Christmas tune is No. 1

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Christmas has come early for Mariah Carey: the pop star's original holiday classic, "All I Want for Christmas Is You," has reached the No. 1 spot on the Billboard Hot 100 chart 25 years after its release.

Billboard announced that the song topped this week's chart, giving Carey her 19th No. 1 of her career. She is only behind the Beatles, who have had 20 songs top the Hot 100 chart.

Each holiday season Carey's "All I Want for Christmas Is You" begins to climb the Billboard charts as its popularity resurfaces.

Last year the song hit a peak at No. 3 and set a new one-day streaming record on Spotify.

"All I Want for Christmas Is You" is the first holiday to top the Hot 100 chart since "The Chipmunk Song" in 1958-59.

The song is from Carey's 1994 album, "Merry Christmas," which is currently No. 1 on the Billboard R&B albums chart. Carey wrapped her All I Want for Christmas Is You Tour on Sunday at New York's Madison Square Garden.

Emotionally complex 'Piazza' lands at Lyric Opera of Chicago

By SCOTT C. MORGAN
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It's no wonder that Grammy Award-winning American opera soprano Renée Fleming would champion "The Light in the Piazza."

This six-time Tony Award-winning 2005 Broadway musical by composer Adam Guettel ("Floyd Collins") and playwright Craig Lucas ("Prelude to a Kiss") fully embraces operatic vocals and emotions. So "The Light in the Piazza" shouldn't be too much of a stretch for Fleming now that she has largely steered her career away from fully staged opera performances.

Fleming and British actor Alex Jennings ("The Crown," "The Lady in the Van") are the main stars for the Chicago leg of this revival's international tour, which was a part of the Los Angeles Opera season and heads next to Sydney. Though not officially a Lyric Opera of Chicago production, "The Light in the Piazza" does feature conductor Kimberly Grigsby leading members of the Lyric Opera Orchestra who bring out the score's lush beauty and romanticism.

"The Light in the Piazza" is inspired by Elizabeth Spencer's 1960s novella, which focuses on a wealthy mother-daughter pair of American tourists in 1950s Italy. Margaret Johnson (Fleming) is keen to show her grown daughter, Clara (Solea Pfeiffer), all the sights she saw on her honeymoon before World War II.

Instead, Clara becomes enthralled with the ardent Florentine youth Fabrizio Naccarelli (Rob Houchen), who is relentless in his romantic pursuit of her. Fabrizio's full family, led by Signor Naccarelli (Jennings), become involved, too.

Due to Clara's "special" condition, Margaret initially wants to put a stop to all this. But watching Margaret change her mind is at the heartbreaking center of this musical. Despite so much surrounding disillusionment (especially from an incisive Suzanne Kantorski as Fabrizio's sister-in-law, Franca), Margaret pins enormous amounts of hope on love so her daughter can have a happy ending.



American tourist Margaret Johnson (Renée Fleming) goes on a stroll with the Florentine Signor Naccarelli (Alex Jennings) in "The Light in the Piazza" at the Lyric Opera of Chicago.

COURTESY OF LIZ LAUREN

"The Light in the Piazza"

★ ★ ★ ½

Location: Lyric Opera of Chicago, 20 N. Wacker Drive, Chicago, lightinthepiaz-zathemusical.com or (312) 827-5600 or lyricopera.org

Showtimes: 7 p.m. Wednesday to Saturday, Dec. 18-21, and Dec. 27-28; 1:30 p.m. Sunday; through Dec. 29

Running time: 2 hours and 30 minutes with intermission

Tickets: \$35-\$219

Parking: Area pay garages and limited metered street parking

Rating: Strong inferences of infidelity; for preteens and older

Considering this tour originated in a concert venue (London's Royal Festival Hall), it's amazing that Olivier Award-winning director Daniel Evans was still able to deliver such an emotionally effective and elegantly simple production. Designers Robert Jones (sets), Brigitte Reiffenstuel (costumes) and Mark Henderson (lighting) work in concert to conjure up the beauty of Italy.

Perhaps the only drawback to "The Light in the Piazza" at the Lyric is Fleming can't compete with longtime theatergoers' memories of Victoria Clark, who originated the role of Margaret Johnson. Though exquisitely sung, Fleming misses many of the humorous asides and some of the dramatic depth that Clark brought to her Tony and Jeff Award-winning performances on Broadway and at Chicago's Goodman Theatre back in 2004.

But any chance to see "The Light in the Piazza" with a full orchestra and so many rich performances is a plus for any theater and music lover. "The Light

in the Piazza" is a modern musical theater classic that fully embraces its moral complexities and so much hopeful romanticism.

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Christmas Eve: 10-2

Monday Dec. 16th and 23rd: 10-6