

Get Out

The week's pocket picks

By SAMANTHA SMITH

Dining

'Sips & Suppers'

If you're planning to dine out this weekend, why not help Washingtonians in need enjoy a hot meal while you're at it? This weekend, join celebrated local chef Jose Andres of Jaleo and minibar fame, along with "slow food" pioneer Alice Waters and cookbook author Joan Nathan, for the sixth annual Sips and Suppers, a weekend of culinary events to support DC Central Kitchen and Martha's Table. On Saturday, head to the Newseum for Sips, a reception featuring food and beverage tastings from dozens of chefs, mixologists and wineries from across the country, as well as live entertainment. On Sunday, the feasting continues with Suppers, a series of exclusive dinners at private homes prepared by local chefs, including the talent behind area favorites like Hank's Oyster Bar, Ripple and West End Bistro. While waiting for your meal, you can enjoy conversations with other diners and the chefs. **Sips on Saturday at the Newseum, 555 Pennsylvania Ave. NW. Suppers on Sunday citywide. Web: SipsAndSuppers.org.**



Theater

'Richard III'

This year marks the 400th anniversary of the birth of William Shakespeare, and Washington's Folger Shakespeare Library is kicking off the party with a performance of "Richard III," one of the Bard's first historical plays. Written circa 1592, "Richard III" tells the story of the titular king of England 1483 until his death two years later. Directed by Robert Richmond, this version of the play will be shown "in the round" as Shakespeare intended — a first for the Folger Theatre for this special occasion. The show opens Tuesday with a pay-what-you-can performance, and tickets will be available at the box office one hour before curtain. To mark the playwright's birthday, the Folger Library also will showcase some of the staff's "favorite things" from the collections, including early editions of Shakespeare's plays, artworks, kitsch and even a Sanskrit translation of "Hamlet." **"Richard III" through March 9 and exhibit through June 15 at the Folger Shakespeare Library, 201 E. Capitol St. SE, 202/544-7077. Web: Folger.edu.**





Pick of the pack

Festival

Chinese New Year Family Festival

The Chinese New Year — the “Year of the Horse” — begins Jan. 31, and 15 days of celebrations will ensue. Based on the Chinese lunar calendar and zodiac, the new year is celebrated all over the world and throughout the U.S., where Chinatowns in San Francisco, Los Angeles, New York and Washington host traditional parades. This week, prepare for the new year by cleaning your house to make room for the coming year’s good fortune — and by learning about the festival’s traditions and impact on Chinese-American culture. On Saturday, the Smithsonian’s American Art Museum, in conjunction with the Chinese Embassy, will host a free family festival, which kicks off at 11:30 a.m. with a traditional lion dance performance. Throughout the day, enjoy puppet shows by the Tianjin Arts Troupe, live music, and arts and crafts, including calligraphy and paper lantern lessons. **Saturday at the Smithsonian American Art Museum, Eighth and F streets Northwest. 202/633-7970. Web: americanart.si.edu.**

Dance

The Jazz/Blues Project

If the smooth jazz sounds of Etta James speak to you more than pirochettes and opera glasses, then the Washington Ballet's latest production may be just the ticket. (And if you adore both, you definitely won't want to miss it.) Opening Wednesday, the Washington Ballet's "The Jazz/Blues Project" intertwines the great American music with classic and contemporary choreography, with live accompaniment provided by Chicago singer E. Faye Butler and the Howard University Jazz Ensemble. Choreographer Trey McIntyre's "Blue Until June," which employs the songs "St. Louis Blues," "At Last" and other Etta James favorites, will be performed, as well as choreographer Val Caniparoli's "Bird's Nest" set to songs by saxophonist Charlie "Bird" Parker. The show includes the world premiere of "Prism," a dance piece by Annabelle Lopez Ochoa featuring pianist Keith Jarrett's "Kahn Concert." **Through Feb. 2 at Sidney Harman Hall, 610 F. St. NW, 202/547-1122. Web: WashingtonBallet.org.**



Theater

'Violet'

Ford's Theatre's first production of the year will warm your heart during a spell of frigid weather. Opening Friday, "Violet" is about three young adults' search for love and self-worth in the tumultuous 1960s, set to an all-American score of bluegrass, country, gospel and rock. The musical follows the title character, who was disfigured in an accident as a girl and decides to visit her favorite televangelist in hopes of being healed. On the bus ride from Spruce Pine, N.C., to Tulsa, Okla., Violet befriends two soldiers — the charming Monty, who catches her eye right away, and the unfailingly kind Flick, a Black man who encounters discrimination in the South of 1964. Based on a short story "The Upland Pilgrim," the acclaimed musical by Jennie Tesori and Brian Crawley premiered off Broadway in 1997 and won the Drama Critics Circle Award and Lucille Lortel Award for Best Musical. **Through Feb. 23 at Ford's Theatre, 511 10th St. NW, 800/982-2787. Web: Ford's.org.**

