

Get Out

The week's pocket picks

By SAMANTHA SAULT



Pick of the pack

Theater

World Stages International Theater Festival

All the world's a stage — and many of its performers will tread the boards at the Kennedy Center this month for an international theater festival featuring works from every continent except Antarctica. Beginning Monday, the World Stages International Theater Festival will showcase 13 contemporary theater productions, as well as staged readings, art installations, and discussions. Washington media junkies won't want to miss "Rupert," Australian playwright David Williamson's drama about media baron Rupert Murdoch, who tap dances his way through the Melbourne Theatre Company's production. For a fresh take on a Shakespeare classic, see "A Midsummer Night's Dream" by British theater company Bristol Old Vic and South Africa's Handspring Puppet Company, the creators of the Tony Award-winning "War Horse." While you're at the Kennedy Center,





Culture

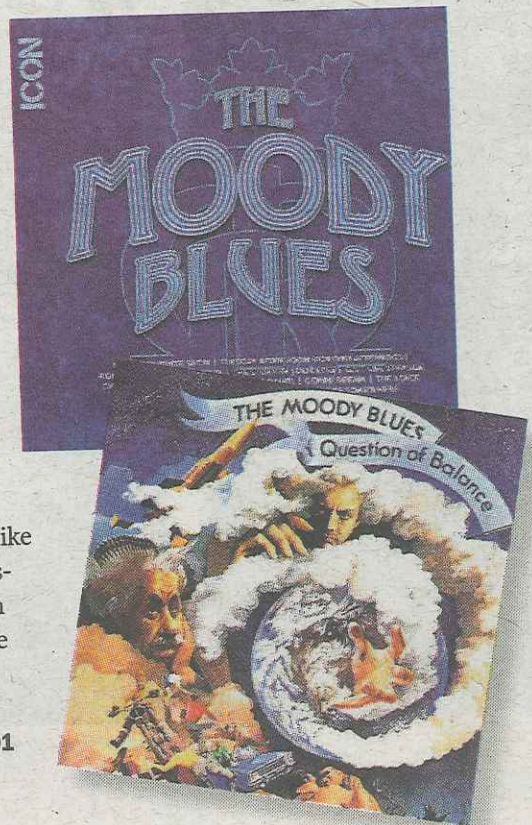
Nowruz: A Persian New Year Celebration

March 20 marks not only the first day of spring, but also Nowruz, the Persian New Year. Meaning “new day” in Persian, Nowruz has been celebrated by Mesopotamian cultures since 3000 B.C. and remains an important celebration of new beginnings today in Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan, Turkey, Pakistan, and other nations in the region. On Saturday, learn about the holiday and make wishes for the new year during the Smithsonian Freer and Sackler Galleries’ free Nowruz festival. From 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., enjoy traditional holiday displays, storytelling, music, dance, arts and crafts, and Persian food, as well as fire jumping, in which celebrants jump over flames to leave behind the troubles of the previous year. Throughout the day, you can catch Iranian animated films in the auditorium, and view the museum’s collection of Islamic art, including ceramics, illustrated manuscripts, and metalwork. **Saturday at the Smithsonian Freer & Sackler Galleries, 1050 Independence Ave. SW. 202/633-1000. Web: asia.si.edu.**

Concert

The Moody Blues

Has the icy weather got you feeling blue? Perhaps an evening with British classic rockers the Moody Blues will lift your spirits. Known for their groundbreaking fusion of modern and classical music, the progressive rock band has produced 24 albums in five decades, including 14 platinum and gold albums. The Moody Blues’ first concept album, 1967’s “Days of Future Passed,” brought international fame with hits “Tuesday Afternoon” and “Nights in White Satin.” The band’s sound has evolved over the years, but the musicians’ commitment to clever compositions and lyrics have remained with hits like “Your Wildest Dreams,” “Isn’t Life Strange,” “Question,” and more. The current touring group, which includes Justin Hayward, John Lodge, and Graeme Edge from the original 1960s lineups, will perform for two nights only this week. **Monday and Tuesday at the Music Center at Strathmore, 5301 Tuckerman Lane, N. Bethesda, Md. 301/581-5100. Web: strathmore.org.**





Dining

Tequila & Mezcal Festival

For the past few weeks, we've been daydreaming about white sand, blue water, and a tangy margarita with a salted rim. If an escape to Mexico or some other tropical destination isn't in the cards this month, you can still feel like you're on spring break with Oyamel's seventh-annual Tequila and Mezcal Festival — celebrating tequila, the trouble-making liquor made from blue agave, and mezcal, its smoky sibling. The festival begins Monday with a party featuring Jose Andres' take on Mexican street food and specialty cocktails, as well as live music by the Latin band Montuno. Throughout the month, the restaurant will host tequila and mezcal tasting dinners, as well as food and drink specials that will take you far away from the slushy streets of Washington, D.C. **Through March 23 at Oyamel, 401 7th St. NW. 202/628-1005. Web: oyamel.com.**



Theater

Hamlet ... the rest is silence

"Hamlet" is Shakespeare's longest play, and the tragic tale of the melancholy Dane's quest for revenge is one of the Bard's most famous and features some of the most quotable lines in literature. But the tragedy still resonates even without its well-known soliloquies. On Thursday, Crystal City's Synetic Theater opens its acclaimed silent version of "Hamlet," using physical theater and music instead of words to tell the story. The play was the first of Synetic's "Silent Shakespeare" series, and won multiple Helen Hayes Awards when it debuted more than 10 years ago. Young professionals will want to buy tickets for the March 19 performance, and enjoy a pre-show reception at Jaleo Crystal City with fellow patrons under 35. **Though April 6 at the Synetic Theater, 1800 S. Bell St., Arlington, Va. 866/811-4111. Web: synetictheater.org.**