



Lyric at the Birch

Mame Brings Her Unique View on Life to the Birch North Park Theatre

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SAN DIEGO— Lyric at the Birch opens its 33rd successful season at the Birch North Park Theatre with **Mame**.

Performance Dates and Times

September 23 (7:30), 24 (7:30), 25 (2:30), 29 (7:30), 30 (7:30), October 1 (7:30), 2 (2:30), 2011

About The Show and Cast

Mame will be the first Jerry Herman score to be mounted by Lyric at the Birch. He is a composer/lyricist who was a major force in the 1960's and 1970's on Broadway. Mr. Herman was the composer/lyricist for three mega-hits in Broadway history. He is one of two people who had three shows that each topped 1000 performances: **Hello Dolly**, with 2,844 performances, **Mame**, with 1,508 performances, and **La Cage Aux Folles**, 1,761 performances. These were numbers of their original Broadway runs. Each show has been revived in multiple settings in recent years both on Broadway and in London.

Jerry Herman was the personal choice of Jerome Lawrence and Robert E. Lee, the authors of the play **Auntie Mame**, to adapt that famous play into a musical. Mr. Herman was an advocate for the then untried musical talents of Angela Lansbury who became a star and a Tony winner for her creation of the title role in **Mame**. The score brought forth several important standards such as "We Need A Little Christmas," "Open a New Window," "It's Today," "That's How Young I Feel," and the great torch song, "If He Walked Into My Life Today."

The show is a vehicle for three strong women actresses and Lyric is fortunate in having **Andrea Huber** (formerly seen in her critically acclaimed performance as Desireé Armfelt in last season production of **A Little Night Music**) as our Mame, **Leigh Scarritt** (last seen as Aunt Alicia in **Gigi**) as Vera and **Eileen Bowman** (recently see as Tzeitel in **Fiddler on the Roof**) as Gooch. **Jonas McMullen** will play the younger Patrick and **Anthony Whitson-Martini** plays older Patrick. This revival will be the first professional production of **Mame** in the San Diego area since 1986. It will feature many talented San Diego and Lyric favorite performers. It will also present a new stage designer, **James Cuomo**, who has many Hollywood credits and who was the production stage manager of the national tour of **Mame**, which featured Edie Adams in the title role.

Mame will be directed by company Artistic Director **J. Sherwood Montgomery**, General Director **Leon Natker** will serve as Conductor, **Shirley Johnstone** as Choreographer, **Justin Smiley** as Lighting Designer and **Pam Stompoly-Ericson** will again design the costumes, hair and makeup.

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Lyric at the Birch

2891 University Ave. • San Diego, CA 92104 • Tel. (619) 231-5714 www.lyricoperasandiego.org

Lyric at the Birch presents *MAME* – 2

Synopsis

Act I

Mame is a happy happening. She is well-to-do, lives in New York at the peak of the Twenties, and is surprised by a "wonderful present," an orphan nephew named Patrick. Now ten-year-old Patrick needs his aunt, and this is something new for Mame-to be needed. It changes her life. It brings her into sharp conflict with her best friend, Vera Charles, a multi-martini grande dame of the legitimate theatre, for Vera can't stand children. The man Mame is about to marry is perfectly willing to take on the boy as a bonus, but Mame doesn't think she'll have time for marriage. "I'll be too busy being a mother!" The boy's nanny, Agnes Gooch, doesn't approve of those irrepressible things which go on in Mame's Beekman Place apartment, and yet she inevitably falls under her spell. Eye to eye, toe to toe, Mame battles Babcock, the Babbitt-ish banker who wants to make young Patrick the prisoner of the Establishment and put the chains of conformity around him. With the balloon burst of the Depression, it looks as if Babcock is going to have his way. Mame loses all her money, and she loses jobs as quickly as she finds them. (Mame's gift is giving, not working for hire!) In a brief adventure as a manicurist, she meets Beau, a wealthy scion of the South. He takes Mame to his plantation for the begrudging approval of his family. They are astounded at her exploits on horseback (so is she!). Beau proposes in the bouncing title song which sings the praises of Mame. There's only one problem as the curtain falls on the first act. Young Patrick, who has given her such joy and provided a purpose in her life, smiles bravely, but he's afraid he has lost his *Best Girl*.

Act II

It's now the 30's and Vera stands by her *Bosom Buddy* when Mame returns to Beekman Place after Beau's sudden death. Patrick, now in college, and Mame's former suitor, Lindsay Woolsey, prompt Mame into writing her memoirs. Gooch has been primed in secretarial school to type up Mame's pearls of wisdom. However an experiment in a liberated life has a transforming influence on Patrick's nanny. The maturing Patrick seems to be slipping away from Mame's ideal of freedom. When he declares his engagement to a fatuous blonde "with the IQ of a dead flashlight battery," Mame is in despair. What did she do wrong? What would she do differently "*If He Walked into My Life Today?*" But the lady's resources are endless. Just as young Patrick rescued her from the shallow trap of the Twenties, she helps the boy to save himself from a life of Darien drabness and snobbery. Ingeniously she foils the Establishment and life goes on, not with Auntie Mame, but with Grand Auntie Mame rescuing another youngster from the toils of conformity. (Synopsis courtesy of TAMS-WITMARK MUSICAL LIBRARY)

Additional Production Information

Book by JEROME LAWRENCE and ROBERT E. LEE.

Music and Lyrics by JERRY HERMAN.

Based on the novel by Patrick Dennis and the play, *AUNTIE MAME* by Lawrence and Lee

All productions in the 2011-2012 season feature Lyric's own live orchestra and chorus, performed at the Birch North Park Theatre. All programs and artists are subject to change without notice.

Purchasing Tickets

Single tickets are \$32, \$37, \$42, \$47, and \$52. Children 5-17 are half price. No children under 5 years old are admitted. Box Office: (619) 239-8836 or online at <http://tickets.lyricoperasandiego.org/>

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General Information

All Lyric performances take place at the Birch North Park Theatre. Disabled persons seating is available with at least 72 hours notice. Evening performances are at 7:30pm; matinees at 2:30pm.

About Lyric at the Birch

Lyric celebrates 32 years of bringing accessible, affordable music theatre productions to San Diego. The company proudly performs musicals and operettas in English, presenting the finest musical talent available with full orchestra and chorus accompaniment at its home, the Birch North Park Theatre.

Lyric's Outreach Department presents invitational dress performances to students and social service organizations throughout San Diego.

For more information on the company, please call the Lyric office, (619) 231-5714. For tickets call the Box Office at (619) 239-8836.

Additional Events in 2011-2012 Season

[Good Bye, Good Luck and GET OUT!](#) • November 4 & 6, 2011

A theatrical event of comic proportion honoring Jack Montgomery, who is retiring as Artistic Director at the end of the season.

[Sinatra Forever](#) • November 11, 12, 13, 2011

A tribute to the music of Frank Sinatra by Rick Michel and an orchestra of 12 (9 of which played with Frank Sinatra). Rick is one of Las Vegas' premier singers, a man of whom the show business bible *Variety* said: "He is the closest thing to Frank Sinatra we have ever heard."

[The Klezmatics](#) • December 18, 2011

2007 Grammy-Award winners, The Klezmatics are world-renowned superstars of the klezmer world. They have released six albums of wild, spiritual, provocative, reflective, and ecstatically danceable music.

[Die Fledermaus](#) • February 10, 12, 16, 18, 19, 2012

This is the crown jewel of all Viennese Operettas written by "The Waltz King," Johann Strauss, Jr. It is presented by Lyric at the Birch with full staging and a live orchestra.

[The Mikado](#) • March 30, April 1, 5, 7, 8, 13, 14, 15, 2012

One of the most favorite works of Gilbert & Sullivan closes our season. The plot deals with confusing romances, identity cover-ups and local authorities who are less than qualified for their public office positions.

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