



**Contact:** Allison Rawlings  
Director of Communications  
(310) 966-2412  
allison@geffenplayhouse.com

**THE GEFFEN PLAYHOUSE WELCOMES BACK CELEBRATED  
ARTIST HERSHEY FELDER IN THE FINAL MOVEMENT OF HIS  
COMPOSER SONATA: *BEETHOVEN, AS I KNEW HIM***

***Geffen Playhouse Announces First Production Confirmed for 08/09 Season***

**LOS ANGELES, February 14, 2008** — On the heels of the acclaimed productions of *George Gershwin Alone* and *Monsieur Chopin*, the Geffen Playhouse announces the highly anticipated culmination of Hershey Felder's Composer Trilogy, *Beethoven, As I Knew Him*, to kick off the theater's 2008-09 season. In *Beethoven, As I Knew Him*, award winning performer Hershey Felder brings the character of Ludwig van Beethoven to life through the eyes of Beethoven's last surviving friend, as well as through the eternal sounds of the maestro's greatest musical works. Based on a true story, *Beethoven, As I Knew Him* completes Hershey Felder's musical trilogy entitled "The Composer Sonata."

Felder, now world-famous for his lauded portrayals of George Gershwin, Fryderyk Chopin and Beethoven, returns to the Geffen after his nearly sold-out run of *George Gershwin Alone* and *Monsieur Chopin* last summer. The productions received twelve LA Ovation Award nominations and won four awards, including *Best Musical* and *Best Lead Actor in a Musical*. The Geffen Playhouse also welcomes back award winning director Joel Zwick (*My Big Fat Greek Wedding*). Zwick, who helmed the productions of *George Gershwin Alone* and *Monsieur Chopin*, also heads up the world-premiere production of *Beethoven, As I Knew Him*.

***THE EIGHTY-EIGHT ENTERTAINMENT, SAMANTHA F. VOXAKIS, AND LEE KAUFMAN PRODUCTION OF  
HERSHEY FELDER'S BEETHOVEN, AS I KNEW HIM***

Music by Ludwig van Beethoven  
Text by Hershey Felder  
Directed by Joel Zwick

Scenic Design	Francois-Pierre Couture
Lighting Design	Richard Norwood
Sound Design	Erik Carstensen
Projection Design / Production Management	Matt Marsden
Assistant Lighting Design	Tamora Wilson
Production Stage Management	GiGi Garcia

**Previews:** Tuesday, August 19 to Tuesday, August 26, 2008  
**Opening Night:** Wednesday, August 27, 2008  
**Closing Night:** Sunday, October 12, 2008

**HERSHEY FELDER (Ludwig van Beethoven/Playwright)**

Broadway, London's West End: *George Gershwin Alone* (Helen Hayes Theatre, Duchess Theatre). Regional and international appearances include *Monsieur Chopin* at Chicago's Royal George Theatre; American Repertory Theatre, MA; Hartford Stage; Ravinia, Chicago; The Old Globe Theatre, San Diego; the Cleveland Playhouse; Command Performance for the Polish Ambassador to the United States, Polish Embassy, Washington, DC; Uijeongbu Theatre Festival, South Korea. *George Gershwin Alone* Chicago 2004-2005; 1999-2007 at Ford's Theatre, DC; American Repertory Theatre, MA; Hartford Stage; The Old Globe, San Diego; Prince Music Theatre; Philadelphia; The Cleveland Play House; The Gilmore Festival; Ravinia; El Paso; South Korea; and others. Upcoming: the World Premiere of *Beethoven*; *Monsieur Chopin* in Paris and Warsaw. Compositions include *Fairytale*, a musical; *Les Anges de Paris*, Suite for Violin and Piano; *Song Settings*, poetry by Vachel Lindsay; *Aliyah*, Concerto for Piano and Orchestra; *Saltimbanques* for piano and Orchestra; *Etudes Thematiques* for piano. Recordings include *Love Songs of the Yiddish Theatre*; *Back from Broadway*, and *George Gershwin Alone* and *Monsieur Chopin* for the WFMT Radio Network Recordings label. Worldwide live broadcast, *George Gershwin Alone*, July 2005. Current projects include the completion of a Negaunee Foundation Chicago commission to complete *Noah's Ark*, an opera. Mr. Felder is on the Board of Directors of the Chicago College of Performing Arts. He has also been a board member of America's historic Ford's Theatre in Washington DC and a Scholar in Residence at Harvard University's Department of Music.

**JOEL ZWICK (Director)**

Joel Zwick directed *My Big Fat Greek Wedding*, the highest-grossing romantic comedy of all time, produced by Tom Hanks, Rita Wilson and Gary Goetzman. Recent films include *Fat Albert* (with Bill Cosby), and *Elvis Has Left the Building*, starring John Corbett and Kim Basinger. Mr. Zwick directed the Broadway production of *George Gershwin Alone* at the Helen Hayes Theatre, as well as all other productions. Mr. Zwick began his theatrical career at La Mama E.T.C., as director of the La Mama Plexus. He has directed on Broadway, Off-Broadway and Broadway touring companies. Currently, Mr. Zwick is recognized as Hollywood's most prolific director of episodic television, having the direction of five hundred and twenty-five episodes to his credit. These include having directed twenty-one pilots, which have gone on to become regular series. Television shows include: *Laverne & Shirley*, *Mork & Mindy*, *Bosom Buddies*, *Webster*, *Perfect Strangers*, *Full House*, *Step By Step*, *Family Matters*, *It's a Living*, *Bros. Wayans*, *Joanie Loves Chachi*, *Jamie Fox*, *Kirk*, *Parent' Hood*, *Angie*, *On Our Own*, *Two Of A Kind*, *Love Boat*, *Hangin' With Mr. Cooper*, etc. Previous New York productions have included *Dance With Me* (Tony nomination), *Shenandoah* (Broadway national tour), *Oklahoma* (national tour) and *Cold Storage* (American Place Theater). He acted in the original New York production of *MacBird*. He directed *Esther* (Promenade Theater, NY), *Merry-Go-Round* (Chicago and Las Vegas), *Last Chance Saloon* and *Woycek* (West End, London). Mr. Zwick has taught drama at Yale University, Brooklyn College, Queens College, Wheaton College, and the University of Southern California. He is a graduate (B.A., M.A.) of Brooklyn College.

**TICKET INFO**

Season subscriptions and pricing available online at [www.geffenplayhouse.com](http://www.geffenplayhouse.com) or via phone at 310.209.1328. Single tickets for *Beethoven, As I Knew Him* available for purchase May 1, 2008 online at [www.geffenplayhouse.com](http://www.geffenplayhouse.com), Geffen Playhouse Box Office 310.208.5454 or Ticketmaster 213.365.3500.

**PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE**

Previews: August 19 – August 26, 2008  
Run: August 27, 2008 – October 12, 2008  
Tuesday through Thursday 7:30 p.m.  
Fridays 8:00 p.m.  
Saturdays 4:00 p.m. and 8:30 p.m.  
Sundays 2:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.

**ABOUT THE GEFFEN PLAYHOUSE**

Awarded the *Preservation Award* by the Los Angeles Conservancy, the *Award of Excellence* from the Society of American Registered Architects, and the *Architectural Award of Excellence* by the Los Angeles Business Council for its acclaimed 2005, \$19 million renovation, the Geffen Playhouse begins its 12<sup>th</sup> season in 2007/2008, enjoying its stature as a leading West Coast theater company and the crown jewel of Los Angeles theater. Noted for its intimacy and celebrated for its eclectic mix of classic and contemporary plays, provocative new works and musicals, the Geffen continues to present a body of work that has garnered national recognition. Named in honor of entertainment mogul and philanthropist David Geffen, who donated one of the largest gifts ever made to an already-constructed theater, the company is headed by Producing Director and President of the Board Gilbert (Gil) Cates, Artistic Director Randall Arney and Managing Director Stephen Eich, and has produced eight world premieres, four Tony, four Pulitzer, and seven Obie-award winning shows in its twelve season history. Proudly associated with UCLA, the Geffen welcomes an audience of more than 130,000 each year, and maintains an extensive education and outreach program, designed to engage young people and the community at large in the arts. For more information, please visit [geffenplayhouse.com](http://geffenplayhouse.com).

**EDITORS PLEASE NOTE:**

Geffen Playhouse  
10886 Le Conte Avenue, Los Angeles (Westwood), CA 90024  
310.208.5454  
[www.geffenplayhouse.com](http://www.geffenplayhouse.com)