5 reasons not to miss Boca’s fine arts festival

By Bill Meredith

Event begins today with live score to “West Side Story”

By Staci Strauss

Festival of the Arts BOCA presents its eighth annual round up of authors, classical and jazz musicians, dancers and filmmakers starting today through March 15 in Mizner Park.

The festival is presented by the Schmidt Family Center for the Arts at Mizner Park, a nonprofit organization, and over the years the group has invited an all-star cast of authors and big thinkers, including Nobel Prize winner Elie Wiesel (three times), Steve Martin (twice), Scott Adams, Barbara Bush and 67 others, who will perform again this year on March 15.

Here are five ways to enjoy this year’s festivities:

1. Take in a movie and a concert — at the same time.

Festival Orchestra Boca will perform Leonard Bernstein’s score to “West Side Story” while the 1961 film is screened in the Mizner Park amphitheater at 7:30 p.m. today.

Tickets start at $25.

2. Consider some big ideas.

The festival’s “Authors and Ideas” calendar is its busiest, with appearances by Pulitzer Prize-winning author Richard Ford (4 p.m. Sunday), “The Cancer Puzzle” author Siddhartha Mukherjee (7 p.m. Monday), Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Thomas Friedman (7 p.m. Wednesday) and more. All authors will speak at the Cultural Arts Center. Ticket prices vary by event but start at $20.

3. See some of the world’s finest dancers share a stage.

The Festival Orchestra Boca collaborate for a performance of Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony at 7:30 p.m. March 14 at the Mizner Park amphitheater. Tickets start at $25.

4. Get inspired by brave girls from around the globe.

“Girl Rising,” directed by Academy Award-nominated Richard E. Robbins, spotlights the stories of nine girls born into unforgiving circumstances. The documentary will be screened at 7 p.m. on Saturday in the Cultural Arts Center and a panel discussion will follow. Tickets are $25.

For the complete festival schedule, go to FestivalsOfTheArtsBoca.org.

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Beach Boys bassist

BOCA RATON — at the same time

Two new blues CDsspotlight South Florida scene

By Bill Meredith

Two new blues CDs available as a double-LP from Greg Ulster, Scott Lane and John Tillmon.

Steely Dan-influenced “Pain It Blue” (featuring Robert Allen Gibbs and Steve Laudicina) and Florida members of Dark Horse Flyer (darkhorseflyer.com) spared no expense in creating music, visual art, coffee and craft beers.

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