

## Farmington Hills talent joins team

# Actress combines business, theater

By CARL STODDARD

Show business is loaded with successful teams. Rodgers and Hammerstein usually come to mind. So do Laurel and Hardy. And of course there was Fred and Ginger. Martin and Lewis, and Simon and Garfunkel.

The names Britten and Sanfield are less well known. But that doesn't mean they lack talent.

Kay Britten, of Southfield, is a singer-guitarist, writer, composer and actress of wide experience and reputation in this country and in England.

Her partner, Sally Sanfield, of Farmington Hills, is an artist of a different sort. She is a concert pianist, a piano teacher since her youth, a sculptor with works on exhibit in the Detroit Institute of Arts and a down-to-earth businesswoman.

Together they have formed Albion Productions, a Southfield-based theater company that offers professional theater productions to audiences around the country.

This Thursday they are presenting "All About Us," a musical written by Ms. Britten, at Southfield-Lathrop High School. They are scheduled to present other productions in Southfield schools early next year. In a way, the presentations are a homecoming for the far-traveling production company.

WHEN THEY presented another Kay Britten musical, "Sing America," in Michigan's upper peninsula, they often found themselves far from home and the usual amenities.

"Once we were in an old community center," Ms. Britten recalls. "It was bitter cold and the kids were sitting on backless benches. The principal came out and bellowed at them. I was horrified."

"All I could do was come out and try to warm them up—physically and mentally."

But traveling on the road has its rewards as well. The group has played in the same quaint historic theater where John Wilkes Booth delivered his lines, and they have worked before the footlights in theaters in New York and Chicago.

Most of their work, however, has been before smaller audiences of young people. But that does not mean their productions are purposely slanted to the young.

"It's family theater," Ms. Britten said. "It's literally for all age groups."

Ms. Britten has written two musicals and created a third based on the fairy tale "Peter and the Wolf." The last is her newest venture and her shortest. It runs about 35 minutes for each performance. More than her other works, it probably holds the greatest interest for young children. That it attracts them at all, she said, is an achievement.

"THERE ARE no harder audiences than kids," she said. "They're totally frank. They're a tough audience, the toughest. It's an experience."

Albion Productions uses only professional-level actors and entertainers for their shows, Ms. Sanfield said.

"We consider we have a good nose for actors," she said. "It's hard to get people of first caliber. We will not accept amateurs."

They say they are the only local production company that demands that their performers meet top New York standards. All cast members, for example, are required to rehearse eight hours a day, six days a week for three weeks before a production goes on the road.

"Ours are fulltime actors," Ms. Britten said.

Persons interested in auditioning for the next production of "Sing America" can call Albion Productions at 334-1120 for an appointment. Ms. Sanfield said they are especially interested in looking for actors who also can sing and dance.

Not all actors possess such versatility, but versatility is the cornerstone of Albion Productions.

Ms. Britten grew up in England and studied at the Royal College of Music in London. She has toured extensively in concert throughout the U.S. and Europe.

Her programs are built around dramatic themes, illustrated with songs

from traditional ballad, musical theater, Elizabethan lute songs, her own songs, poetry and dramatic excerpts. She has had her own TV shows, has made a short movie for universities and wrote a play about Welsh poet Dylan Thomas.

She formed Albion Productions in 1975 to write and produce theater productions for young people. Ms. San-

field joined in as business director and added a more business-like approach to the company.

Ms. Sanfield is known for her abilities as a concert pianist and often accompanies Ms. Britten during performances. She also is well known as a sculptor of fibers and has had her work displayed in a number of exhibitions.



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The following mailing dates are recommended for sending holiday gifts abroad:

Military mail to Africa should be sent by Dec. 9. Alaskan mail should be in the box by Dec. 16, late date to Hawaii is Dec. 16; Dec. 2 to Australia; Caribbean mail Dec. 14; Central and South America, Dec. 2; European mail, Dec. 12; Far East, Dec. 12.

Greenland, Dec. 9; Iceland, Dec. 14; Mid East, Dec. 5 and Southeast Asia, Dec. 2.

International mail to Africa should be sent off by Dec. 7; Dec. 2 for Australia; Dec. 14 for the Caribbean and West Indies; Dec. 7 for Central and South America; Dec. 12 for Europe; Dec. 23 for the Far East; Dec. 5 for the Mid East and Dec. 2 for Southeast Asia.

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