



Cheech and Chong will make their third appearance at the Royal Oak Music Theatre in March.



A Pablo Cruise performance at the Royal Oak Music Theatre was simulcast on WWW-FM (106) late last year.

Rock, jazz fill music theater

By ETHEL SIMMONS

Last year more than 150,000 music fans—most of them between the ages of 20-35—passed through the doors of the Royal Oak Music Theatre.

Concert attendance at the theater this year is expected to top 200,000, according to Terry McGovern, the 27-year-old general manager of Paragon Investment Co., which owns the theater.

The bearded McGovern, a Birmingham resident, is a graduate of Groves High School and Eastern Michigan University, where he was a business major.

"I started college in 1959, the year of Woodstock," he said. "I started to manhandle bands and got into full-scale promotion of concerts."

McGovern considers himself very lucky to hold the position he has with Paragon Investment Co. From sleek company offices in the contemporary building on Big Beaver in Troy, he supervises "the music theater and its shelter of being an investment company."

PATRICK FREYDL of Bloomfield Hills is president of Paragon Investment Co. He is an entertainment lawyer, handling contracts for rock stars.

Many of the "names" who perform at the Royal Oak Music Theatre are not household names yet. But a lot of them will be.

"Ninety per cent of the entertainers whose records are played on rock stations are the artists booked at the Royal Oak Theatre," McGovern explained.

Only the facility's size—the theater seats 1,700—limits the star quality of the attractions that may be booked. The rock group Boston, for example, played the Detroit area for the first time at the Royal Oak Music Theatre, under a previous owner.

Last summer an appearance by Boston filled 40,000 seats at the Pontiac Silverdome.

HALL AND OATES, who play light rock, also first performed in Detroit at the Royal Oak Music Theatre, during the fall of 1976. They have since played Cobo Hall twice.

Although the theater doesn't put an emphasis on comedy, Martin Mull, who achieved fame on TV's "Fennelwood 2Night," first played metropolitan Detroit in a music and comedy concert at the Royal Oak Music Theatre, in April 1977.

And Cheech and Chong, the comedy team starting in Detroit at the Royal Oak Music Theatre, are coming back to the Royal Oak Music Theatre for two performances Friday, March 2.

"Their booking manager said they wanted to play the Royal Oak because they got treated well here before their movie came out," McGovern declared.

Everything isn't rock or comedy at the theater, however. Prominent names in jazz, as well as ascending stars, have been presented on stage. Chuck Mangione, who plays orchestral jazz, did two nights in December 1977.

THE ROYAL OAK Theatre was

originally a vaudeville house, as well as movie theater. It was built in 1928 by the Kunsky chain, which also built the Birmingham Theater around the same time.

Both theaters suffered withdrawal pangs when vaudeville died and more recently when multiple movie houses drew away audiences from the single-screen movie theaters.

The Birmingham Theatre has come alive again, primarily with legitimate stage productions.

The Royal Oak Music Theatre occasionally offers a "middle of the road" entertainment, with stars whose appeal is generally to a broader age group than its usual younger audiences.

Tony Bennett, backed by a 26-piece band, sang there last March. Doc Severinsen, along with a 30-piece band, blasted his trumpet at the theater in April.

ACCORDING to McGovern, "In a few days, we have billed the Royal Oak as the acoustically perfect theater. When Tony Bennett was here, he put down the mike during a performance and said, 'Now you'll hear how the sound is in an old vaudeville house.' He sang two songs, non-electronically."

Most of the entertainers at the Royal Oak Music Theatre are booked through Brass Ring Productions, from booking agent Rick Kay who used to be manager for rock star Alice Cooper.

A former owner of the Royal Oak Theatre converted the facility to live entertainment during 1975-77. Paragon Investment got the keys to the theater on Labor Day of 1977. "We

tried to go in with jazz and rock. That's our bread and butter," McGovern explained.

Roger Hook of Southfield is facility manager for the Royal Oak Music Theatre. The theater does 50-60 shows a year, and the box office (phone 543-8222) is open eight hours a day.

"It's been 90 miles an hour since the day we started," McGovern said. He stressed the fact, "We are an investment company."

HOW'S THE THEATER doing moneywise? "The first year's the toughest," he admitted. But he's not in the red. "It's in the light black," McGovern said.

The Royal Oak Music Theatre has not abandoned its role as a movie house, occasionally offering a contemporary musical series. Recently, the theater was sold out with a showing of the three-hour film "Woodstock," marking the 10th anniversary of the real-life rock extravaganza.

The Motor City Organ Society maintains the theater's 1928 Barton Theatre Pipe Organ, which is the second largest in the metropolitan area (next to Detroit's Fox Theatre organ).

Prominent organist Hector Oliviera will play a concert Feb. 16 on the Royal Oak Theatre organ.

The theater also is undergoing its first large-scale restoration in 15 years. Approximately \$20,000 has been spent on the stage and thrust, additional lighting, as well as painting the interior. "We're trying to keep that Gothic look to it," McGovern said.

Meadow Brook Theatre presents 'Blithe Spirit'

Theater

Actors whose professional credits include New York, Hollywood and London, have been cast in the Meadow Brook Theatre production of Noel Coward's farce, "Blithe Spirit," which opens a four-week run Thursday at 8:30 p.m. on the Oakland University campus near Rochester.

Michael Allison, who played at Meadow Brook earlier this season as General Burgoyne in "The Devil's Disciple," has returned to play the central role that Coward himself originated in London.

The character is Charles Condomine, a cool novelist, a scoffer at the idea of ghosts. His troubles begin when he arranges a seance in his country home to get material for a new book, bringing in a kooky medium for the purpose, named Madame Arcati, who will be played by Jeanne Arnold.

Miss Arnold will be remembered for her performance last year at Meadow Brook in "She Stoops to Conquer," "Picnic" and "The Corn is Green."

MADAME ARCATI is piqued that Condomine doubts her occult powers and she demonstrates her gift in a way the novelist can never forget. She summons up the spirit of Elvira, Condomine's departed first wife. Elvira's ghost can only be seen

and heard by Condomine, much to the consternation of his second wife, Ruth, who will be played by Valerie French. Elvira will be portrayed by Cheryl Giannini, Meadow Brook actress who played Lady India in "Ring Round the Moon" last month. Others in the production will be Ken Graham, Mary Benson and Louise Martin.

"Blithe Spirit" is being staged by Terence Kilburn with a setting by Donald Beckman, lights by Fred Foner and costumes by Mary Lynn Bonnell.

Tickets for "Blithe Spirit," which will run through Feb. 25, may be purchased at Hudson's or by calling the Meadow Brook Theatre box office, 377-5300.

Opening week performances of "Blithe Spirit" are scheduled at 8:30 p.m. Thursday and Friday; 2 and 8:30 p.m. Saturday and 6:30 p.m. Sunday. The following three weeks will offer performances at 8:30 p.m. Tuesday-Friday, 6 and 8:30 p.m. Saturday, 6:30 p.m. Sunday and 2 p.m. Wednesday. The theater is dark Monday.



'Hold Me!' co-stars

TV stars Diana Canova, who portrays Corinne on "Soap," and Steve Landesberg, who plays Arnold Dietrich on "Barney Miller," are the first celebrities to be announced for the Birmingham Theatre's second season. Ms. Canova and Dietrich will co-star in Jules Feiffer's "Hold Me," billed as a madcap, hilarious romp of sketches, skits and vignettes. The show opens the season March 3-10.

Your Invitation to Worship

For Church Directory Information
Please Call Pat 644-1100 Ext. 217

NATIVITY EPISCOPAL CHURCH
2127 W. 11 Mile Rd.
SUNDAY WORSHIP
10:00 A.M. & 10:30 A.M.
St. John's and Church School
6:15-7:30
Pastor: John C. Frankenburg

BEAUTIFUL SAVIOR LUTHERAN CHURCH
5631 North Adams Road
SUNDAY SCHOOL
8:15 A.M. Matins Service
9:30 A.M. Sunday School
10:30 A.M. Morning Worship
Communion 1st Sunday
Pastor: W. M. L. Miller
Pastor: W. M. L. Miller
Pastor: W. M. L. Miller

St. John American Lutheran Church
23725 Giff Road Farmington Hills
SUNDAY WORSHIP
8:30 A.M. & 11:00 A.M.
Nursery at 11:00 Service
645-0584

St. Andrew Lutheran Church LEA
5525 Telegraph Rd.
SUNDAY SCHOOL
9:30 A.M. & 11:00 A.M.
SUNDAY WORSHIP
10:30 A.M.
Pastor: W. M. L. Miller
Pastor: W. M. L. Miller

CLARENCEVILLE UNITED METHODIST
20300 Middlebelt, Livonia
Pastor: George Fisher
SUNDAY WORSHIP
8:30 A.M. & 11:00 A.M.
SUNDAY SCHOOL
9:30 A.M. & 11:00 A.M.
Pastor: George Fisher

NORTHROCK PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
14 Mile and Laker Road
SUNDAY SCHOOL
9:30 A.M. & 11:00 A.M.
SUNDAY WORSHIP
10:30 A.M.
Pastor: R. F. Kent

LUTHERAN CHURCH OF THE INCARNATION L.C.A.
30320 Two Mile
SUNDAY SCHOOL
9:30 A.M. & 11:00 A.M.
SUNDAY WORSHIP
10:30 A.M.
Pastor: R. F. Kent

ST. PAUL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
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SUNDAY SCHOOL
9:30 A.M. & 11:00 A.M.
SUNDAY WORSHIP
10:30 A.M.
Pastor: R. F. Kent

Salem United Church of Christ
Oakland at G. River Farmington Hills
SUNDAY SCHOOL
9:30 A.M. & 11:00 A.M.
SUNDAY WORSHIP
10:30 A.M.
Pastor: R. F. Kent

Church is for Everyone!

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LUTHERAN CHURCH OF THE INCARNATION L.C.A.
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SUNDAY WORSHIP
10:30 A.M.
Pastor: R. F. Kent

FRANKLIN COMMUNITY CHURCH
SUNDAY SCHOOL
9:30 A.M. & 11:00 A.M.
SUNDAY WORSHIP
10:30 A.M.
Pastor: R. F. Kent

Bethlehem Lutheran Church
35300 Eight Mile Road
SUNDAY SCHOOL
9:30 A.M. & 11:00 A.M.
SUNDAY WORSHIP
10:30 A.M.
Pastor: R. F. Kent

Holy Cross Greek Orthodox Church
25225 Middlebelt Rd. Farmington Hills 477-1677
Rev. S. J. Anthony, Th.B., Priest
10:30 am Sunday School
10:30 am Divine Liturgy English Sermon
"Visitors Always Welcome"

FARMINGTON HILLS BAPTIST CHURCH
28301 Middlebelt Road, 1/4 Mile N. of 12 Mile
A FULL-SERVICE CHURCH
SUNDAY
GRADED BIBLE SCHOOL
9:45 AM
WORSHIP SERVICES
11 AM
CHILDREN'S CHURCH
11 AM
WEDNESDAY FAMILY NIGHT
8:30-10:10 PM
Pastor: Douglas B. Brown
Nursery Provided at All Services
C.B.A. Affiliated
No Steps

First United Methodist Church
1589 West Maple at Pleasant
Ministries: James W. Wright, G. Bryn Evans
Thomas H. Beaven, Harold E. Weemhoff
Church Services
8:30, 9:30, & 11:00 a.m.
Church School
9:30 - 11:00 a.m.
Nursery Care Provided
Nursery School: Monday through Friday
9:00-11:30 a.m.

First Baptist Church
Bates and W. Main, Farmington Hills
Robert G. Middleton, Minister
Diane W. Swann
Home of Christian Education
Church School
9:45 AM
Nursery Care
11:00 AM

Bloomfield Hills Christian Church
The Community House
380 South Bates, Birmingham
SUNDAY 10:30 A.M.
Bible School
11:00 A.M. & 11:30 A.M.
SUNDAY WORSHIP
6:00 P.M. Praise Service
Wednesday 7:15 P.M.
Bible Study
645-1202

Ward United Presbyterian Church of Livonia
Farmington Road & Six Mile Road
422-1150
Worship & Sunday School 9:30 & 11:00 a.m.
HOLY COMMUNION
"Do You Treat Everyone the Same?"
Dr. Bartlett L. Hess
7 p.m.
CHRISTIAN SERVICE BRIGADE/
PIONEER GIRLS NIGHT
Testimonies from our kids - special music
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Family Dinner 6:00 p.m. Classes & Chorus 7:00 p.m.
Activities for All Ages
9:30 Sunday Service
Broadcast Over WMUZ-FM 103.5
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First Church of God
Farmington Hills
25717 Power Road
SUNDAY SCHOOL
9:30 A.M. & 11:00 A.M.
SUNDAY WORSHIP
10:30 A.M.
Pastor: R. F. Kent

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Episcopal
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SUNDAY SCHOOL
9:30 A.M. & 11:00 A.M.
SUNDAY WORSHIP
10:30 A.M.
Pastor: R. F. Kent

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The Bahá'í Faith
"We dwell in one world, and here have been created through the operation of one Will. Blessed is he who mingling with all men in a spirit of utmost kindness and love."
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Bahá'í of Bloomfield
624 N. Main
Farmington Hills, MI 48033
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