

Entertainment

Ethel Simmons editor/644-1100



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Concerts fill outdoor scene

By Ethel Simmons
staff writer

Another summer concert season is upon us. Outdoor series with pop, rock, jazz, folk, country and comedy stars at Meadow Brook, Pine Knob, the Troy Hilton ("Summer Nights") and the Hotel Pontchartrain ("P.Jazz") are among traditional favorites.

Free outdoor concerts are presented each season at "New Center Swings" and "Wednesdays in the Park" in Detroit's New Center, and in other communities.

For its 23rd season, Meadow Brook Music Festival at Baldwin Pavilion on the Oakland University campus in Rochester Hills is offering the usual Friday and Saturday night series, with lots of big names. There will also be a nostalgic "Summer Solid Gold Series" and a separate "Star Series," with Mitzi Gaynor, Roger Whittaker, Pia Zadora (with Norm Crosby as the opener), and Lou Rawls and Maynard Ferguson.

MORE THAN 7,000 concertgoers may be seated in the pavilion and on the lawn.

Friday and Saturday concerts accent Liberate, Debbie Reynolds and Donald O'Connor, Engelbert Humperdinck, the Lettermen and Tom Paxton, Ferrante and Teicher, Jean-Pierre Rampal, Johnny Mathis (with Jeannine Burnier as the opener), a "Salute to Broadway" (Detroit Symphony, Poppy Skitch Henderson, Margaret Whiting and Robert Carroll), a "Salute to the Big Bands" (Tex Beneke, Helen Forrest, Paula Kelly Jr. and the Modernaires), Peter, Paul and Mary, Tony Bennett and Rosemary Clooney, The Golden Boys of Bandstand ("Frankie Avalon, Fabian and Bobby Rydell"), "An Evening

in Old Vienna," "Music from the Great Motion Pictures" (Manhattan Transfer, Jack Wagner, and Lou Rawls and Maynard Ferguson).

The "Summer Solid Gold Series" will spotlight "Motor City Magic" (Mary Wilson, Junior Walker and the All Stars, the Marvellettes, Mary Wells and the Contours) in the first concert; "A Salute to the Great Male Singers" (Johnny Rivers, Del Shannon, Lou Christie and Freddie Cannon), in the second concert; Frankie Valli and the Four Seasons and Three Dog Night, in the third concert, and Fats Domino and Jerry Lee Lewis, in the final concert.

Rock and pop stars are the main attractions in concerts presented by Brass Ring at Meadow Brook. Performers include Michael Franks and George Howard, Tangerine Dream, B.B. King and James Cotton, Spyro Gyra, Joan Baez and Don McLean and Livingstone Taylor, Emmylou Harris, Jean-Luc Ponty, David Sanborn, Manhattan Transfer, Jack Wagner, Petra and Kenny Loggins.

PINE KNOB Music Theatre in Clarkston, celebrating its 15th anniversary season, puts the best on rock stars but also presents other music and comedy entertainment. Steppenwolf and John Kay, and Montrose opened the season Saturday at the 16,000-seat outdoor theater. Alabama and the Bellamy Brothers, headlining Series Eight, appeared Sunday, as the first attraction on one of nine separate subscription series for the season.

New attractions and single tickets sales followed announcement of the subscription series, which is now sold out.

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Where to call for tickets

Still need tickets for the current summer concert season? Here's where to call to find out who's playing when, if tickets are available and what it costs.

Meadow Brook Music Festival — Box office, 377-2010. Ticket prices vary according to concert but range from a low of \$8 for the lawn to a high of \$23 for the pavilion.

Pine Knob Music Theatre — Information line, 425-6666. Individual tickets are \$10-\$23, depending on the attraction.

Summer Nights — Cover charge of \$5 goes into effect at 7:30 p.m. (You must be 21 to attend.) For more information, call the Troy Hilton at 555-9000.

P.Jazz — Tickets at Hudson's and All Ticket World outlets: Reserved seating tickets are \$11.50-\$14.50, and general admission tickets are \$2.50-\$11.50, depending on the concert. On day of concert, tickets are sold on the Terrace at the Hotel Pontchartrain after 5 p.m.

Sizzling star Mitzi Gaynor has got 'paprika'

By Ethel Simmons
staff writer

SHE'S MITZI, she's glitzy and she's bringing her dazzling Las Vegas-style revue to Meadow Brook Theatre, to open the 23rd season at Baldwin Pavilion.

Glamorous singing and dancing star Mitzi Gaynor, who has sent many a male's temperature soaring with her sexy, high-energy production numbers in clubs and on television specials, is practical and straightforward about her professional career.

No prima donna, she telephoned this interviewer as prearranged, from her Beverly Hills home, introducing herself simply: "Hi, this is Mitzi."

The star of 10 TV variety specials, 1969-79, hasn't been performing on television for years, but she's going into production now with another show for the small-screen viewers.

GAYNOR DECLARED, in an even-toned voice, "They killed everybody in every possible way they can. They've been funny in every way they can. It's time we got back to singing and dancing."

Her career on the big screen, as a Hollywood movie star, ran from the '50s to the early '60s, and in that period Gaynor made nearly 20 movies, but she's not remembered as a really major screen personality.

She was Nellie Forbush, however, in the movie version of the Broadway musical hit, "South Pacific," a part that many an actress would have died for.

Asked what she thought of those years spent being a movie actress, Gaynor responded frankly, "I didn't like it at all. I don't think I was very good in movies."

"South Pacific" was my best work," she said. "I came into the film business at a funny time," she continued, pointing out that men's roles dominated the movies then.

BUT SHE ADMITS her part in not being a strong presence onscreen. "I always felt like the camera was intruding on me. TV and live performance, I think that's the best thing I do."

While she once played the nightclub crowd, the only club she performs in now is in Atlantic City.

"I've done theaters for 10 years," she said. Among her theater dates are concerts at such outdoor venues as Meadow Brook.

"I've had many a fly go down the front of my dress," she began, and recited a list of typical minor disas-

ters for a star performing out-of-doors, concluding with, "I've been rained on."

Appearing in the Detroit area is nothing new for Gaynor, although this is her first time at Meadow Brook. Just a few months ago she performed at the Premier Center in Sterling Heights.

IN THE TWO-HOUR show, she appears as everybody from Dr. Ruth to Carmen Miranda. She has 17 costume changes, and works with 10 male dancers.

The sizzling first half opens with Gaynor's version of the Pointer Sisters' "I'm So Excited" and closes with their "Neutron Dance." She also appears as a hobo and does a number, "Saturday Night in Toledo, Ohio, Is Like Being Nowhere at All."

Second half of the show is "like watching a 1940s musical." The spotlight falls on the Mellowaires, a "Gilda" number, three guys doing the Andrew Sisters, a boogie-woogie to "Sing Sing Sing," and a love song from that period. "We close with a great big tap dance," Gaynor said.

The sensational costumes Gaynor is known for, which show off her curvaceous figure, are done by designer Bob Mackie.

"He has been doing my costumes since 1968," she said. "I introduced him to Cher and Carol Burnett."

A onetime Detroit resident, Gaynor was born in Chicago and moved to the Motor City with her family when she was 3. They moved from Detroit when she was 11.

BOTH HER PARENTS were in the performing arts, her father as a conductor and collist and her mother as a dancer.

"I've studied all my life," Gaynor said. She's still on a schedule of activity to keep her show-business career moving ahead.

Having the stamina to perform demands constant vigilance. It was 28 years ago that Gaynor starred in "South Pacific," but she's still, obviously an entertainer in top form.

"You got to have the get up and go. I'm Hungarian (she was born Francesca Mitzi von Gerber) and I've got a lot of paprika on my tail," she said. Gaynor does aerobics and follows a weight training program.

She knows you can't stay young forever but, "I don't want to find it all on the floor."

She also works with a coach every day, on her singing. "I'd rather stay in shape," she said.

This zippy artist works about 40 weeks out of the year and is booked for half of 1987. She will be performing this summer, Saturday-Sunday,



Mitzi Gaynor will change her costumes 17 times and perform as everyone from Dr. Ruth to Carmen Miranda during her high-energy show opening the Meadow Brook Music Festival season.

July 5-6, at Expo '87 in Vancouver, B.C.

The Fox stars. They all discovered they aren't married. I was married to Donald O'Connor."

DURING HER Hollywood years, Gaynor made only four films that were not musicals. These include "The Joker Is Wild" with Frank Sinatra, "For Love or Money," "Happy Anniversary" with David Niven, and "We're Not Married" ("They used all

Her dancing partners, in movie musicals, over the years have included Gene Kelly, O'Connor and Dalley. "These are the three guys I danced

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