

upcoming things to do

Deadline for the Upcoming calendar is one week ahead of publication. Items must be received by Thursday, to be considered for publication the following Thursday. Send to: Ebel Simmonds, Entertainment Editor, The Observer, 55 Esplanade, 30251 Schoolcraft Road, Livonia 48150.

THEATER TRIPS

The Community House in downtown Birmingham is offering travel opportunities this fall for those interested in an evening at the theater. Dinner and the theater is combined for either the Community House trip to "Les Miserables," Tuesday, Oct. 10, at the Fisher Theatre in Detroit. A dinner at New Center's classic Normandie Grill is planned before "Les Miserables." The motorcoach will leave the Community House at 5:30 p.m., and the cost per person will be \$84. For more information, call 644-5832.

FILM ACTING

Performance Workshops Inc. is offering an intensive film acting workshop featuring Mike Fenton of Fenton, Feinberg and Taylor Casting on the West Coast. A member of the Casting Society of America, Fenton is one of the film industry's most influential feature-film casting directors. Joining Fenton will be Vincent Cirincione, of Vincent Cirincione Associates, an East Coast talent manager with clients working in prime-time television, soap operas, TV commercials and on Broadway. Workshop dates and times are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 30, and 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 1, at the Drury Inn in Troy. Workshop fee is \$125. For more information, call Performance Workshops, Inc. at 443-9871.

DESSERT THEATERS

The Community Center Farmington-Farmington Hills Family Dessert Theaters continue with the Jerry Jacoby Concert on Thursday, Sept. 28; "A Little Night Music" on



Joe Jelenc entertains at the Marriott Dearborn Inn.

Thursday, Oct. 12; the Chautauqua Express on Wednesday, Oct. 25; Territorial Chant on Wednesday, Nov. 8; and "The Frog Prince" on Wednesday, Dec. 6. Showtime for all performances is 7 p.m. Tickets are \$4 per person or \$12 per family. For reservations, call 477-9404.

CRUISE DAY

Parents and their children may share an afternoon when Gemini Travel presents Family Cruise Day from noon to 3 p.m. Sunday, Sept. 24, at Orchard Mall in West Bloomfield. Visitors will be able to see films of Disney World and the Premier Cruise Line. Representatives from Delta Airlines and the cruise line will be on hand to answer questions. For the children, there will be a clown, face painting and balloon sculpting. For further information call 855-3600.

DEARBORN INN

The Marriott Dearborn Inn's Gold Eagle Lounge offers the following entertainment: Monday, 7-11 p.m., pianist Joe Jelenc playing old favor-

ites, Tuesday-Thursday, 7-11 p.m., Marian Vento at the piano singing old standards and contemporary songs. Big band sounds and old love songs are presented for dancing the night away Fridays-Saturdays, 8 p.m. to midnight, to the Marian Vento Trio. English-style High Tea in the lobby, features Jelenc at the grand piano, Monday-Saturday, 2-5 p.m. Jelenc performed for 10 years at the Matus restaurants before leaving to establish his own business, the Black Tie Agency, in Birmingham. He also entertains at the Oakland Hills Country Club Sunday brunch.

STUDIO THEATRE

Shakespeare's "A Midsummer Night's Dream" continues its current engagement at the Oakland University Center for the Arts. This production, directed by T. Andrew Aston of the Department of Music, Theatre and Dance, also was presented in May at OU. Performances are at 8 p.m. Friday-Saturday, Sept. 22-23, and 2 p.m. Sunday, Sept. 24, at the Warner Studio Theatre on campus in Rochester Hills. Tickets are \$8 general admission; \$4 for senior citizens, students and children, and \$3 for OU students. They may be reserved by calling the Center for the Arts box office at 370-3013.

THEATER PREVIEW

John Ulmer, acting director of Florida's Osolo Theatre, will discuss "The Boys Next Door" on Monday, Oct. 16, at the Rochester Hills Public Library. He will produce the play at Meadow Brook in November. For more information, about Meadow Brook previews call the library at 658-2000 or Meadow Brook Theatre at 370-3310.

'Les Miserables' deserves long run at Fisher Theatre

Performances of "Les Miserables" continue through November (and probably through the end of the year) at the Fisher Theatre in Detroit. For ticket information, call the box office at 872-1000.

By Mary Jane Doerr
Special writer



Mary Jane Doerr

been skillfully built out around the sides of the stage.

"Les Miserables" is not a musical about nice people. It is a story of criminals, thieves, whores and the poverty stricken. It is also a story of hope that surges forth amid the struggle for freedom from despair, oppression and tyranny — a Titanen Square set to exquisitely beautiful music.

One of the five touring productions of "Les Mis" now playing North America has brought the barricade and their struggle for freedom to Detroit's Fisher Theatre for what, hopefully, will be a very long run.

Rightfully so. This stirring French musical is rich with idealism and a strong uplifting message that draws us into its realm and doesn't let go. It is filled with realism set within the intrinsic power of the hope that comes from the kindness of a Christ-like character who turns away from the hatred of angry men.

"Who will be strong and stand with me?" are the rousing words of the ensemble of schoolboys fighting for a new world, clubbed together on a pile of junk, the barricade, topped with a red flag and illustrated lighted from above as though their cause had spiritual attention. In the Fisher Theatre, this has

friends who are gone, killed in the massacre.

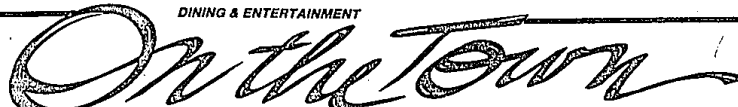
BROADWAY'S VALJEAN, Colm Wilkinson, is now Toronto's "Phantom of the Opera," but J. Mark McVey has the pure tenor voice to sing "Bring Him Home" and the acting style of a saintly Valjean. Hollis Resnik refrains from belting her "I Dreamed a Dream," she fittingly uses the color and texture of her voice to portray the tragedy.

Nineteen-year-old Melissa Errico as Cosette shows promise with an operatic voice that easily manages her high C and an acting ability that brings tears in her final scene as Valjean dies beside the silver candlesticks. Drew Eschelman and Rosalyn Rahn give the comic relief with the Dickenslike songs.

The musical is an ensemble where 10 times the leading characters take center stage for solos. Charles Fittone (Javert) provides the show's most memorable scene "Stars" because of his deep, rich, baritone voice.

Mary Jane Doerr of Troy is a fulltime teacher and freelance writer who specializes in opera and musical theater.

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