

# Playwright explores 'Ties That Bind'

By William Coutant  
staff writer

Birmingham playwright Kitty S. Dubin can identify with the lead character in her play "Ties That Bind," but not just because she is in the same line of work.

The play, in its first run at The Purple Rose Theatre in Chelsea, revolves around Dr. Karen Bloom, a psychologist whose best-selling book about personal relationships thrusts her into the celebrity spotlight. Her sudden success on the lecture and talk-show circuit interferes with her personal clients and nearly destroys her own 10-year marriage.

"What I write about is relationships in the '90s," said Dubin, who like the play's lead, conceals individuals and couples. "What's happened is that women have been told to fulfill themselves and have a career. Men have been told to be more supportive."

"That's all well and good," she said. "But the change is an extremely slow process. You have to find

your own way. Very few of us are there."

AND THEREIN lies the struggle of the lead character, Dr. Karen Bloom, and her husband, another couple and the talk-show host who helps promote Bloom's book. "There are seven characters in the play and five of them go through major journeys," Dubin said.

That growth in character is something most of us have to grapple with in our daily lives, where often husbands and wives both work while having a family. Dubin has been married 22 years and has a 14-year-old son.

The play's message was not lost on T. Newell Kring, artistic director for The Purple Rose when he saw it in a reading at the Hilberry Theatre on the Wayne State University campus.

"I saw a lot of potential in the script," he said. "The dialogue made sense, it had a beginning, middle and an end, and its message rings true."

"Ties That Bind" has the qualities

that audiences, both "trained and untrained" in listening for a script's subtleties, can enjoy, Kring said.

ALTHOUGH DUBIN wrote her first play in 1971, she really began her best work in 1985, after a long time away from her craft. Since '85 her plays have been performed at the Jewish Ensemble Theatre, State Fair Theatre and Wayne State University. She has also produced a play, "The Last Resort," in Texas in 1988. This will be her first production staged at the Purple Rose. Her newfound success makes sense, Dubin said.

"I'm in a stage in my life when I've lost my fear of rejection, have the discipline and something to say," she said.

Kring said "Ties That Bind" is the third play written by a Michigan playwright to be performed at the Chelsea theatre. The Purple Rose, a not-for-profit theater, will try to showcase plays from Michigan and the Midwest as much as possible, he said.

AS TO HER writing future? Dubin said she'll see how "Ties" plays, but plans to continue writing.

"I'm going to take life as it comes," she said. "But I know I'll keep writing."

"Ties That Bind" will begin performances Thursday, Nov. 14 at the Purple Rose Theatre Company's Garage Theatre, 137 Park Street in Chelsea. The show will play Thursdays through Saturdays at 8 p.m. with Sunday matinees at 2 p.m. for a limited engagement of six weeks through Dec. 22.

Tickets are \$17 for Fridays and Saturdays, and \$13 for Thursday and Sunday performances. Five lower-priced preview performances will run from Thursday, Nov. 14 through Nov. 21 with tickets costing \$10. All tickets for Opening Night, Friday, Nov. 22, are \$25. For reservations, call the theater box office at (313) 475-7902.



Birmingham playwright Kitty Dubin's new play, "Ties That Bind," premieres at the Purple Rose Theatre in Chelsea Nov. 14. The play's focus is relationships in the '90s and the struggles couples face in balancing a successful career with their family life. Dubin, who also works as a counselor, has been actively writing plays since 1985.

## upcoming things to do

- STAR CLIPPER**  
Celtic Group and Michigan Star Clipper hold auditions for 91 Christmas show and 92 musicals and mysteries, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Nov. 14 and 3-9 p.m. Nov. 18 on The Star Clipper, 840 North Pontiac Trail in Walled Lake (at Pontiac Trail and W. Maple). Needed are vocalists, musicians (pianists, keyboardists, electric bass, and saxophone, clarinet players) and actors with a background in stand up comedy or improvisational theater. Bring a resume, picture and audition tape if available. To make an appointment, call 454-0054.
- SOUND CREW**  
Jerry McKenzie's Sound Crew performs Nov. 15-16 at the Bird of Paradise nightclub on Ashley Street in downtown Ann Arbor. The group consists of four Observer & Eccentric area musicians: drummer Jerry McKenzie, pianist Matt Michael, Jack Brokensha on vibes and Dan Jordan on bass. Sets will be played at 9:30 and 11 p.m. as well as 12:30 a.m. each night. Dress is casual. For reservations, call 662-8310.
- TROY PLAYERS**  
Troy Players present the romantic comedy "How the Other Half Loves" 8 p.m. Nov. 15-17, Nov. 22-23 at the Troy Community Center, Big Beaver at 1075. Tickets \$8 adults, \$7 seniors and students. For information, call 879-1285.
- DETROIT SYMPHONY**  
The Detroit Symphony Orchestra's 13th annual Hudson's Metro Tour will bring the symphony to Novi 8

p.m. Saturday, Nov. 16 at Novi High School's Fuent Auditorium, 24062 Taft Road. For ticket information, call 344-8300.

**COMEDY**  
Hal Roach, Ireland's International comedian, will perform at a fundraiser benefiting the Legionnaires of Christ at the Detroit Athletic Club, 6 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 16. The \$100 per plate dinner includes cocktails, entertainment, and mint auction. For information, call 338-4923.

**PHILHARMONICA**  
Philharmonica Chorus performs 4 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 17 at St. Michael's Church, 25225 Code Road, (Ten Mile Road, two blocks west of Lahser). The Philharmonica Chorus repertoire ranges from the Baroque (cantatas

by Bach, Handel and Telemann) into the early 20th century (Debussy, Elgar, Grainger and Stanford). For ticket information, call 546-4254 or 775-4450.

**AUCTION**  
Third annual Lights, Camera, Auction to benefit the handicapped and underprivileged children, 5:30 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 17, at the Northland Theatre, Southfield. For information, call 855-6410.

**FARMINGTON PLAYERS**  
Farmington Players "Bus Stop" William Inges, modern American masterpiece has roles for three women, and five men of various ages. Auditions, 7 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 20 at the players barn, 32332 Twelve Mile Road, Farmington

Hills, (one half mile west of Orchard Lake Road). For information, call 455-3084 or 669-8096.

**TROY THEATRE ENSEMBLE**  
The Troy Theatre Ensemble presents the classic Pulitzer Prize comedy, "You Can't Take It With You," 7:30 p.m. Friday, Nov. 21-23 at the Troy High School Performing Arts Center, 3179 Livernois Troy. All seats are \$4, reserved seating. For reservations, information, call 689-0644 ext. 262 or 689-5007.

**U-M ALUMNAE**  
University of Michigan Alumnae Club of Birmingham Guest night dinner at the Bloomfield Hills Country Club, 7 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 21. Speaker, U-M baseball coach, Bill Freehan. Call Dolly Johnson, 646-5538 for reservations.

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